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PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS



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# PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS

IN HONOR OF

JAMES EDWIN CREIGHTON

BY

FORMER STUDENTS

IN THE SAGE SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY

IN COMMEMORATION OF TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' SERVICE AS  
TEACHER AND SCHOLAR

New York

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GEORGE HOLLAND SABINE

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To

JAMES EDWIN CREIGHTON

TEACHER, SCHOLAR, FRIEND

THESE ESSAYS ARE DEDICATED

BY SOME OF HIS FORMER

STUDENTS AS A MARK OF

THEIR GRATITUDE

AND ESTEEM



## PREFACE

I HAVE been asked to give a brief account of JAMES EDWIN CREIGHTON as a teacher.

I deem it a privilege and it affords me genuine pleasure to join his former students in this tribute to Professor Creighton's work and worth.

The ideal professor to-day as always must be characterized by genuine unworldliness. He is in the world,—and the more he participates in the life of the world the fuller and the more vital will his personality become. Yet he is not of the world. The objects which most men pursue,—material possessions, place, and power,—are not for him the chief ends of existence. Intellectual development is the aim and business of his life,—intellectual development first in himself and then in others. In a world given over largely and enthusiastically to other pursuits he stands for the things of the mind. He realizes himself as a loyal member of the kingdom of ideas, of knowledge and science, of truth and beauty. In Heine's phrase he is a knight of the Holy Spirit.

Professor Creighton for a quarter of a century has embodied this spirit at Cornell University. He has not been indifferent to the practical problems of university administration and business; he has taken his full share of that sort of work in faculties and on committees; he has recognized and asserted that even the highest functions of a university may be conditioned by its income and endowments: but he has always stressed and kept in the foreground the idealism in which a real university lives and moves and has its being. He has always seen clearly what the proper work and function of the professor are, and that insight has furnished the regulative and dominating conception of all his thought about colleges and universities. Such a man is an invaluable asset to any university faculty. And that Pro-

fessor Creighton's colleagues at Cornell recognize his inspiring leadership is manifest from their election of him as Dean of the Graduate School,—that department in which the spirit of the university touches the culmination of its development.

It is very important to have sound views of the place and function of the university in that complex whole which we call human civilization. It is still more important to convert this intellectual apprehension into life and practice. Now Professor Creighton has for many years seemed to me one of the most dynamic and vital embodiments to be found anywhere of the highest spirit of the modern university. Others may have sought different objects, none of them unworthy, as, for example, large classes, popularity, economic advantages, public recognition; but for him the supreme aim and business of life has been growth in knowledge and thought and the stimulation of thinking in his students. Others may have become discouraged from failure to achieve their objects, but with him, the condition of success being in himself, failure was impossible. Others may have lost faith in the worth and the supremacy of the intellectual life; he, always achieving inner growth, has been a live coal on the altar of truth. His faith and the faith of others like him among the teachers of Cornell University has kept the institution, if not like Moses' bush "aglow with God," at least with lamps filled and wicks burning in preparation for the coming of a new and fuller revelation of the Holy Spirit of Reason.

In the class room Professor Creighton's work has been highly stimulating. He has had no desire for big numbers, but his students include many of the ablest and most thoughtful in the University. And for a not inconsiderable proportion of them his work marks an epoch in their intellectual history. Sometimes Professor Creighton lectures, oftener he practices the Socratic art of questioning, always he sees to it that the students read, write, and think for themselves. It is a serious business,—opening the eyes of the mind, awakening reflection, bringing young persons to a new



consciousness of themselves, of the world which they perceive, and of the relation of both to the Infinite Reality on which somehow both seem to depend, their being's source and destiny. It is a high privilege and a deep responsibility to traverse themes like these with aspiring and ingenuous youth. Every one who knows him recognizes that Professor Creighton, in the language of Scripture, has been ordained and sanctified for this high calling. And his students, many of whom are teachers scattered all over the Continent, loyally and affectionately recognize the debt of gratitude they owe him for stimulating them to venture on that self-creative activity in which the highest intellectual development must always consist.

It was said of Dr. Arnold, the famous headmaster of Rugby, who was also professor at Oxford, that his chief aim as a teacher was to produce moral thoughtfulness in his pupils. I think we may truthfully say that Professor Creighton's aim has been to develop in his students intellectual seriousness as well. Perhaps, as the world is rational as well as moral, there may not be so much real difference in the aims of these two teachers as the verbal discrimination implies. Be that as it may, I am sure that all former students of Professor Creighton will feel that I am correctly voicing their sentiments in applying to him the words written of Dr. Arnold by his son in the beautiful memorial poem entitled "Rugby Chapel":

And there are some, whom a thirst  
 Ardent, unquenchable, fires,  
 Not with the crowd to be spent,  
 Not without aim to go round  
 In an eddy of purposeless dust,  
 Effort unmeaning and vain.

\* \* \* \* \*

But thou would'st not *alone*  
 Be saved, my father! *alone*  
 Conquer and come to thy goal,  
 Leaving the rest in the wild.  
 We were weary, and we  
 Fearful, and we in our march

Fain to drop down and to die.  
Still thou turnedst, and still  
Beckonedst the trembler, and still  
Gavest the weary thy hand.

\* \* \* \* \*

Therefore to thee it was given  
Many to save with thyself;  
And, at the end of thy day,  
O faithful shepherd! to come,  
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.

That this "faithful shepherd" may for many years to come continue at Cornell University those stimulating and uplifting ministrations whose first two and a half decades this volume commemorates, is a consummation devoutly to be wished. That certainly is the hope and fervent desire of our academic community,—of the teachers and students, past and present, who know and appreciate the inspiring service he renders and the ennobling influence he exerts.

JACOB GOULD SCHURMAN.

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PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS



# PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS

## THE CONFUSION OF CATEGORIES IN SPINOZA'S ETHICS

ERNEST ALBEE

THE consistency of Spinoza's philosophical system has been very differently rated, on the whole, by the earlier and by at least some of the later critics. Of course it was long before his philosophy received anything like fair criticism at all, on account of *odium theologicum*; but then most accredited critics tended to over-emphasize the supposed inexorable logic of Spinoza's procedure, while looking askance at his premises and deprecating his conclusions. An instance of this was Jacobi's extravagant statement that one could not be said to understand Spinoza at all, if a single line of the *Ethics* remained unclear. On the other hand, Professor Erhardt, in his comparatively recent and very able critical work on Spinoza,<sup>1</sup> is willing that we should regard the philosopher as a thinker of the first class only on condition that we clearly recognize that the system itself is distinctly second class.

It is a little hard to see how the general belief in Spinoza's thoroughgoing consistency arose,—probably the earlier critics were imposed upon by the external and essentially misleading form of mathematical demonstration, as there is some reason to suppose that Spinoza himself was,—but if we should find ourselves obliged even to reverse the former estimate and regard his system as one of the most inconsistent, instead of the most consistent, of the important systems in modern philosophy, this would not necessarily reduce Spinoza himself to the rank of a second-rate thinker.

<sup>1</sup> *Die Philosophie des Spinoza im Lichte der Kritik*, Leipzig, 1908.

The great fault of a mediocre thinker usually is that, having been born with a capacity for only the narrowest vision, he hits upon some one category or set of categories, and then either employs his one method recklessly for all purposes or obstinately refuses to take into consideration the many sides of experience to which his method obviously does not apply. In the latter case, he may attain to a considerable degree of consistency, but at the expense of truth in the larger and more vital sense. Spinoza's fault was plainly the opposite: standing almost at the threshold of technical modern philosophy, he had a dazzling vision of the world as a knowable totality; but, when he came to work out his system in detail, when he came to deal with the most various aspects and implications of experience on the assumption that they must all contribute to our comprehension of reality as a unified whole, he more or less unconsciously employed and in an important sense helped to develop various categories, which, however valid within their own sphere of relevance, could by no means be employed in the sweeping way that Spinoza did actually employ them without serious danger of conflict or even of essential contradiction.

The first category that we meet with in Spinoza's *Ethics* will have to be treated with rather scant courtesy, even though it be the traditional conception of 'substance': (1) because it seems, if not obsolete, at any rate decidedly obsolescent; but more particularly (2) because we are here concerned primarily, not with the validity of the category itself, but rather with its logical significance for Spinoza's characteristic treatment of the problems of ethics. It must be frankly acknowledged that the well-worn formula, "The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things," was a good deal more than a mere catchword for early rationalism of the Cartesian type, though it would be a wild and illiterate interpretation to assume that this was merely a typical case of the fallacy of 'representative perceptionism.' We are not so much concerned with the fact that reality itself is here regarded as a quasi-logical order, with which the order and connection of our ideas, so



far as logical, may well correspond, as with the fact that we are here confronted with the fundamental assumption of a logical and an ontological *prius*: for all truth there must be an ultimate logical ground; for all reality, a corresponding ontological *prius*. This was the characteristic procedure of rationalism of the Cartesian type, when it had been reduced to logically consistent form, as by Spinoza. Leibniz, indeed, profoundly modified this method by his conception of the world as a system of unique but interrelated substances; but even he held firmly to the belief in certain logical 'first truths,' which were supposed to be such in their own right, so that they would hold equally well in a world fundamentally different in its actual constitution from this present existing one.

But we are here concerned only with Spinoza's conception of an ultimate Substance, which he calls indifferently *Deus sive Natura*. And, for the present purpose, we may safely omit all consideration of the well-known technical difficulties involved in the important distinction between *Natura naturans* (God and his 'attributes') and *Natura naturata* (God and his 'modes'). The really important consideration is, that substance is regarded as that which can exist in itself, while everything besides substance must exist in or by reason of something else. Here we find, in its baldest form, the conception of the logical and ontological *prius*, always tending to emerge in this type of early rationalism. Moreover, it is explicitly stated,—what in any case would be logically implied,—that, in the case of substance as here conceived, any determination would be a negation.<sup>1</sup> So much for substance, whether the attributes be taken as subjective or objective in their ultimate significance, and, at this distance, it is not difficult to see that the Erdmann-Fischer controversy on this question was largely irrelevant; for, if "the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things [reality]," the attributes must be both subjective and objective. For

<sup>1</sup> The contrary logic of Leibniz' conception of substance is worth noticing in this connection.

want of a better name, I shall call this assumption the postulate of 'logical parallelism.' It is highly convenient to have a label, for we shall soon encounter another postulate, equally important for Spinoza, which cannot be reconciled with this.

Now the question naturally arises, whether substance, in this sense, is a legitimate principle of explanation at all, or merely the hypostatization of the conception of ultimate logical ground. At any rate, we are confronted with the apparently contradictory ideals of an absolutely indeterminate substance, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, a world in *some* sense determined *in infinitum*. The mysterious transition from the one point of view to the other is apparent. The world regarded as absolutely determined, in some as yet undefined sense, finds its ultimate ground in substance; while the only thing that we are supposed really to know about substance is that, in its true nature, if such an expression be permissible, it is absolutely indeterminate. The infinites of mathematics are now held to be amenable to strictly scientific treatment; but the Absolute is more refractory, particularly when taken abstractly as that which exists 'in itself.'

The first fifteen propositions of Part I of the *Ethics* practically amount only to a more comprehensive definition of substance as ultimate ground. In Proposition xvi we are told: "From the necessity of the divine nature must follow an infinite number of things in infinite ways—that is, all things which can fall within the sphere of infinite intellect."<sup>1</sup> This reminds one too much of the crude and literal interpretation of the logic of chance, according to which all computations would *actually* be realized in an infinite series. But it is more pertinent to remark that this is the very

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II, p. 59 of the Elwes translation of Spinoza's 'Chief Works,' which will be followed in quotations. Page references will also be to this translation. The White-Stirling translation might have been preferred for quotations, except for certain peculiarities of philosophical terminology, which make it inconvenient for the purpose. The Van Vloten and Land text of the original is, of course, taken as standard.

misleading phrase

opposite of any intelligible application of the conception of logical ground: nothing (in) particular is here regarded as the ultimate ground of everything in particular. Of course we are not disposing of the Absolute thus easily; the conception of the Absolute and the Finite as essential correlatives gives rise to problems that we cannot even glance at here. On the other hand, the Absolute as the In-Itself, upon which all that is finite depends, while it exists in happy unconcern of the Finite in all its practically infinite specific manifestations, is already discredited. That this is not an imaginary difficulty will be seen from Proposition xxix, the 'caption' of which reads: "Nothing in the universe is contingent, but all things are conditioned to exist and operate in a particular manner by the necessity of the divine nature."<sup>1</sup> In other words, the world considered as *Natura naturata*, with its endless relativity and complete determinateness, is referred to *Natura naturans*, where any determination would be a negation,—apart from the differentiation of the 'attributes' themselves, presumably an illogical exception.

The famous Appendix to Part I of the *Ethics*, in which Spinoza seems to dispose summarily, not only of all anthropomorphic conceptions of (Divine) Final Cause, but of all moral values as well, is less important than would appear, for the absolute determinism apparently contended for is not as yet referred to any intelligible logical ground or practical category.<sup>2</sup>

It is different when we pass to Part II, "Of the Nature and Origin of the Mind." Here we find the original form of the theory of parallelism, although the motive of the philosopher in developing this conception was presumably metaphysical rather than scientific. The assumption of an infinite number of attributes,—as if anything less than an infinite number would be unworthy of the 'infinite essentiality' of God,—we may, of course, pass over as irrelevant: the only attributes that we know of are Thought and Extension, and to these

<sup>1</sup> P. 68.

<sup>2</sup> This whole problem will be considered later in another context.



alone, naturally, Spinoza devotes his attention. The two 'substances' of Descartes are simply degraded to 'attributes' or aspects of the one only Substance, *Deus sive Natura*; and the assumption is, that any mode of substance is necessarily manifested on the plane of both attributes and with equal adequacy. Like most ontological explanations, this one is lacking in real cogency; for Spinoza pays the price of practical dualism for the theoretical satisfaction of maintaining an ontological monism. At any rate, however, he has a real working hypothesis at last, even if we must regard the metaphysical justification of this hypothesis as questionable. But it will soon appear that he has adopted a hard taskmaster. He has evaded, rather than solved, the difficult philosophical problem regarding the relations between mind and body; and, in adopting this standpoint of parallelism, convenient and legitimate for many practical purposes of science, so long as it is not taken in a metaphysical sense, he has cut off all possibility of consistently maintaining, in the logical sense, the original and fundamental postulate, that "the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things,"—a postulate crude enough in its original formulation, but in *some* sense true, if thought is able to cope with reality at all,—and, what is even more important from the point of view of the present inquiry, he has adopted a principle which can never so much as permit a serious consideration of moral values, however unconventionally regarded. Physical and mental processes do factually correspond, and that is the end of the matter. For convenience, I shall call this assumption the postulate of 'psycho-physical parallelism,' in spite of the unfortunately modern sound of the term; for it suggests both the possible legitimate application and the inevitable limitation of the sphere of application of this category.

It must be remembered that what is attempted here is a logical analysis and criticism of Spinoza's procedure, not a running summary of his actual treatment of the problems examined. The bulk of Part II is devoted to the consideration of metaphysical and logical problems, although



the postulate of 'psycho-physical parallelism,' as I have ventured to call it, assumed throughout this Part, is really relevant only to the psychological method. The resulting confusion of metaphysical, logical, and psychological problems hardly need detain us; for the really essential matter, from the point of view of ethics, is, that Spinoza here first develops, in intelligible form, the conception of a thoroughgoing quasi-physical determinism, which would really be as fatal to a satisfactory treatment of theory of knowledge as to a satisfactory treatment of ethics itself.

Proposition xxxvi reveals the essential difficulty. The 'caption' reads: "Inadequate and confused ideas follow by the same necessity as adequate or clear and distinct ideas."<sup>1</sup> "Inadequate and confused ideas" may or may not follow 'necessarily'; but it is fair to assume that they do not "follow by the *same* necessity as adequate or clear and distinct ideas," if there be such a thing as truth at all. This is simply a case of the confusion of categories. That Spinoza himself saw no difficulty here is sufficiently evident from the fact that he first explicitly states the postulate of 'logical parallelism' in this Part, which is dominated, on the whole, by the postulate of 'psycho-physical parallelism.' In truth, it is difficult to escape the belief that the first formula is sometimes understood in an ambiguous sense by Spinoza, so that it answers equally well to express the logically distinct postulates of 'logical' and 'psycho-physical parallelism.'

It is generally assumed that in Part III of the *Ethics*, "On the Origin and Nature of the Emotions," Spinoza's problem is almost wholly scientific, though it is plain from the start that he proposes to use his results in the interest of his ethical theory. It must be admitted that he himself says, at the close of his preliminary observations: "I shall consider human actions and desires in exactly the same manner, as though I were concerned with lines, planes, and solids."<sup>2</sup> And yet, the 'caption' of Proposition I reads: "Our mind is in certain cases active, and in certain cases passive. In so far

<sup>1</sup> P. 109.

<sup>2</sup> P. 129.

as it has adequate ideas, it is necessarily active, and in so far as it has inadequate ideas, it is necessarily passive." This distinction, all-important for both Spinoza's theory of knowledge and his ethical theory, as will presently appear, is plainly out of place in the present connection, where the explanations are doubtless intended to be causal in the sense of ordinary science.

The preliminary definitions of pleasure and pain are confusing, because, taken literally, as they sometimes are by popular commentators, they seem to imply that all emotions are 'passions,' a position perhaps compatible with the characteristic standpoint of psychology, but which, if accepted in the ultimate sense, would make Spinoza's ethical theory (and, for that matter, any real ethical theory) impossible. These definitions, as given in the 'note' to Proposition XI, are as follows: "By *pleasure* . . . in the following propositions I shall signify a *passive state wherein the mind passes to a greater perfection*. By *pain* I shall signify a *passive state wherein the mind passes to a lesser perfection*."<sup>1</sup> Desire has been defined already as "appetite with consciousness thereof"; and Spinoza adds: "Beyond these three [pleasure, pain, desire] I recognize no other primary emotion,"—a simplification that is supposed to be a radical improvement upon Descartes. Spinoza's matter of fact explanation of the origin of the passions,—which has often been over-praised, but which must always be treated respectfully as an interesting pioneer attempt in a difficult field,—need not detain us in so far as it is merely a psychological explanation, good or bad in the scientific sense; but the cross-currents of the argument need watching. The first part of the 'note' to Proposition XXXIX reads: "By *good* I here mean every kind of pleasure, and all that conduces thereto, especially that which satisfies our longings, whatsoever they may be. By *evil* I mean every kind of pain, especially that which frustrates our longings." In this particular case, the context seems to imply that this is only a provisional definition; and so it must emphatically be regarded, for in his

<sup>1</sup> P. 138.

treatment of ethics proper Spinoza is as far as possible from holding to 'quantitative hedonism,' though he is equally far from subscribing to any form of mere asceticism. The confusion is made worse by the contrary implication of Proposition LVI, the 'caption' of which reads: "There are as many kinds of pleasure, of pain, of desire, and of every emotion compounded of these, . . . as there are kinds of objects whereby we are affected."<sup>1</sup>

But the transition from the (predominantly) psychological to the (predominantly) ethical point of view takes place suddenly enough in the next proposition but one (Prop. LVIII): "Besides pleasure and desire, which are passivities or passions, there are other emotions derived from pleasure and desire, which are attributable to us in so far as we are active." And Proposition LIX reads: "Among all the emotions attributable to the mind as active, there are none which cannot be referred to pleasure or desire."<sup>2</sup>

Here, then, at the end of Spinoza's (mainly) psychological treatment of the emotions, as given in Part III, we are in a position to look forward as well as back. The main drift of the argument has been that our emotions are as susceptible of causal explanation as are any of the other phenomena of nature. From this point of view, of course, it makes no real difference whether the mind is determined by 'adequate' or by 'inadequate' ideas; the all-important consideration is that it is always determined, not 'free.' But, from the point of view of logic and theory of knowledge, as well as from the point of view of ethics, it makes every difference whether we are 'active' (determined by adequate ideas)

<sup>1</sup> P. 168.

<sup>2</sup> P. 171. It should be noted that *cupiditatem* is translated 'pain' by Elwes, not 'desire,' as in the above corrected translation. Of course this is only 'a slip of the pen' in the literal sense of the words (the text used is not at fault in this case); but it should be noted that, whereas the emotions which are 'passions' are variously explainable in terms of pleasure, pain, and desire, according to Spinoza, pain cannot be involved in the case of the emotions which are 'activities' as opposed to 'passions,' for pain goes with 'passivity' alone. The meaning of 'activity' and 'passivity,' as understood by Spinoza, will be more evident later.



or 'passive' (determined by inadequate ideas). Not that we are ever determined by ideas as such, whether 'adequate' or 'inadequate,'—for Spinoza realizes that the mind functions as a whole,—but we are as capable of being determined by emotions inseparably connected with our intellectual nature as we are of being determined by emotions that are mere 'passions.' Hence the possibility of truth and freedom, though the consideration of these problems carries us far beyond the ordinary point of view of psychology.

In turning to Parts IV and V, we are prepared to find Spinoza's direct treatment of the problems of ethics, supposed to be based upon the foundations already laid. The titles are sufficiently descriptive of the main trend of the argument: it will be remembered that Part IV is "Of Human Bondage, or the Strength of the Emotions;" Part V, "Of the Power of the Understanding, or of Human Freedom." Even from the beginning of Spinoza's argument (in Part IV), however, confusion is apparent to the careful reader. He first practically recapitulates the drift of the argument of the Appendix to Part I. 'Perfection' and 'imperfection' are purely relative and human designations; the standard is always a preconceived idea, traceable to some subjective desire on the part of him who evaluates. As in the previous form of the same argument, Spinoza holds that "the eternal and infinite Being, which we call God or Nature, acts by the same necessity as that whereby it exists."<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, "a cause which is called final is nothing else but human desire, in so far as it is considered as the origin or cause of anything." The reason why this fundamental truth is not generally recognized is that "men are generally ignorant of the causes of their desires." This brief argument requires a little dissection; the last part is plainly a reaffirmation of the position previously taken by Hobbes, that all so-called 'final' causes are reducible to terms of 'efficient' causes. But what was consistent for Hobbes, who regarded mechanism as the ultimate category, was plainly inconsistent for Spinoza, whose whole procedure tends to reduce what we

<sup>1</sup> P. 188.

ordinarily mean by 'efficient' causality to terms of logical ground and consequent. We are not yet concerned with the question whether freedom can be provided for in Spinoza's system: we are merely bound to recognize that the possibility of freedom cannot be brushed aside in the name of mechanism, unless Spinoza is prepared to recognize mechanism as the ultimate category. The 'necessary existence' of God, from which the mechanical 'necessity' of natural events is supposed to derive, is of course to be understood as a logical and ontological necessity, and therefore as on an entirely different plane.

Again, as in the Appendix to Part I, Spinoza holds that the terms 'good' and 'bad' "are merely modes of thinking, or notions which we form from the comparison of one thing with another." "For instance, music is good for him that is melancholy, bad for him that mourns; for him that is deaf, it is neither good nor bad." But this is a puzzling introduction to what follows, for we are immediately told that these terms should be retained. The philosopher says: "In what follows, then, I shall mean by 'good' that which we certainly know to be a means of approaching more nearly to the type of human nature, which we have set before ourselves; by 'bad,' that which we certainly know to be a hindrance to us in approaching the said type."<sup>1</sup> This sounds as dogmatic on the side of constructive ethical theory as the preceding passages had been to the contrary effect, and the same tone is preserved in the 'Definitions.' There Spinoza says: "By *good* I mean that which we certainly know to be useful to us." And again: "By *evil* I mean that which we certainly know to be a hindrance to us in the attainment of any good." His manner of justifying our 'certainty' as to what is good or bad for us in the ethical sense will be considered in due time. Here we need only notice that Spinoza has already turned his back upon all points of view which rule out ethical evaluations as subjective and illusory. This means an essential reversal of what had before seemed to be his attitude toward the problem of morality.

<sup>1</sup> P. 189.



The general standpoint of Part IV, "Of Human Bondage, or the Strength of the Emotions," presents no special difficulty, at any rate so long as we confine ourselves to the attempt to understand Spinoza's own position. From his point of view, it is useless to discuss human conduct on the basis of abstract ideals conventionally accepted. We must begin by definitely recognizing our human limitations, and that means regarding man, from one point of view at least, as a part of the order of nature, "infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes" (Prop. III). And he adds: "It is impossible, that man should not be a part of Nature, or that he should be capable of undergoing no changes, save such as can be understood through his nature only as their adequate cause" (Prop. IV). In other words, the power of mere passion is not our own power, but rather that of external causes, for here we are by definition 'passive' or 'in bondage.' And we must not look for release to 'reason,' abstractly considered. Later rationalistic moralists might well have given more heed to Spinoza's frank acknowledgment: "An emotion can only be controlled or destroyed by another emotion contrary thereto, and with more power for controlling emotion" (Prop. VII). This is reënforced by the later statement: "A true knowledge of good and evil cannot check any emotion by virtue of being true, but only in so far as it is considered as an emotion" (Prop. XIV).<sup>1</sup>

It will soon appear that Part IV is not by any means wholly or mainly devoted to a consideration of "Human Bondage." In the 'note' to the proof of Proposition XVIII, Spinoza says: "In these few remarks I have explained the causes of human infirmity and inconstancy, and shown why men do not abide by the precepts of reason. It now remains for me to show what course is marked out for us by reason, which of the emotions are in harmony with the rules of human reason, and which of them are contrary thereto." And he anticipates his further argument by showing in a general way that "reason makes no demands contrary to

<sup>1</sup> P. 198.

nature." After insisting upon the necessity of self-preservation in terms that suggest Hobbes, he concludes in a different spirit: "Therefore, to man there is nothing more useful than man—nothing, I repeat, more excellent for preserving their being can be wished for by men, than that all should so in all points agree, that the minds and bodies of all should form, as it were, one single mind and one single body, and that all should, with one consent, as far as they are able, endeavor to preserve their being, and all with one consent seek what is useful to them all."<sup>1</sup>

In the argument that follows, Spinoza endeavors to explain the function of reason in the moral life. If the detailed treatment of this problem leaves a good deal to be desired, as judged by the more exacting technical standards of to-day, it should always be remembered that our philosopher was the first great rationalistic moralist in the sense of modern philosophy, and that, when he finally comes to deal with the special problems of ethics, he shows far greater consistency and real philosophical grasp than in the first three Parts of the *Ethics*. In other words, Spinoza was not merely a great pioneer in ethical theory, but a pioneer who instinctively avoided many of the mistakes that we have come to regard as characteristic of the procedure of later rationalists. In spite of certain infelicities of expression, he always tends to regard reason as internally regulative rather than as externally legislative. For example, he says: "In so far as men are assailed by emotions which are passions, they can be contrary one to another" (Prop. xxxiv); whereas, "In so far only as men live in obedience to reason, do they always necessarily agree in nature" (Prop. xxxv). This may sound commonplace enough; but the meaning, plain from the context, is, that the true difference between the life of unregulated passion and the life of reason is not the difference between being determined by feeling alone and being determined by reason alone,—both obvious impossibilities,—but rather the difference between being determined by 'external causes' ('bondage'), where the

<sup>1</sup> P. 202.

internal rational control is perhaps at a minimum, and being determined by emotions that themselves bear witness to the internally organizing agency of reason ('freedom'). "The highest good of those who follow virtue is common to all, and therefore all can equally rejoice therein" (Prop. xxxvi). The harmony suggested is not an externally arranged harmony, 'preëstablished' in the bad sense, but a harmony developing from within in proportion as the emotional life is organized in terms of reason.

And Spinoza's ethical ideal, exacting as it will prove to be in some respects, is singularly free from that rigorism for its own sake that has done so much to discredit some of the later forms of rationalistic theory. Though not the end directly to be sought, "pleasure in itself is not bad but good: contrariwise, pain in itself is bad" (Prop. xli). Indeed, one is not likely to forget the rather quaint remark made in a later 'note' (appended to Prop. xlv): "I say it is the part of a wise man to refresh and recreate himself with moderate and pleasant food and drink, and also with perfumes, with the soft beauty of growing plants, with dress, with music, with many sports, with theatres, and the like, such as every man may make use of without injury to his neighbor."<sup>1</sup> There is no word of disparagement here or elsewhere in the *Ethics* for the commonly recognized 'good things of life,' which the philosopher himself sacrificed so cheerfully for freedom and the higher 'blessed life.'<sup>2</sup>

The often quoted theses that "Pity, in a man who lives under the guidance of reason, is in itself bad and useless" (Prop. l); that "Humility is not a virtue, or does not arise

<sup>1</sup> P. 219.

<sup>2</sup> The difference between the tone that Spinoza adopts here and that which he had employed in the *Improvement of the Understanding* and, still more, in the earlier *Short Treatise*, is too obvious to require more than passing mention. Of course this does not mean on the part of Spinoza the concession of anything essential, but merely the broadening of his moral point of view; nobody could have understood better that, when the hour strikes, sacrifice (as regarded from the finite point of view) may have to be absolute.



from reason" (Prop. LIII); and that "Repentance is not a virtue, or does not arise from reason; but he who repents of an action is doubly wretched or infirm" (Prop. LIV), lose much of their apparently paradoxical character, if we remember that in each case Spinoza is speaking of mere emotions, unregulated by reason, which, therefore, according to his view, belong to the 'passive' as opposed to the 'active' side of our human nature. In all three cases he recognizes that, "as men seldom live under the guidance of reason," these passions do more good than harm.<sup>1</sup> Of course this is not to say that the philosopher really takes the conventional attitude toward these distinctively Christian emotions; but it will be best to pass on at once to what will be found to be the key to his position.

Many misconceptions of Spinoza's meaning, at this the crucial point of his argument, would have been avoided, if more attention had been paid to Proposition LIX: "To all the actions, whereto we are determined by emotion wherein the mind is passive, we can be determined without passive emotion [*absque eo*] by reason."<sup>2</sup> This is very badly expressed (in the ambiguous original text), but we need not be in doubt as to the philosopher's meaning. It will be remembered that Proposition VII of this Part reads: "An emotion can only be controlled or destroyed by another emotion contrary thereto, and with more power for controlling emotion." Spinoza never forsakes this position, which fact differentiates his ethical method from most of later ethical rationalism. At first, it might seem to commit him to some form of determinism of the purely 'naturalistic' type, which would rule out any further consideration

<sup>1</sup> P. 223.

<sup>2</sup> It is unfortunate that this very important passage should have been mistranslated in both the Elwes and the White-Stirling versions. Elwes translates the last clause: "... we can be determined without emotion by reason" (Vol. II, p. 227); the White-Stirling translation reads: "... we may, without the affect, be determined by reason" (Second edition, p. 228). The original text is ambiguous because elliptical, and the translations criticised are grammatically possible, but philosophically they mean the opposite of what Spinoza certainly meant.

of the problem of moral 'freedom.' But this is not the case: even in the 'note' appended to his original definition of 'emotion' at the beginning of Part III, Spinoza says: "If we can be the adequate cause of any of these modifications [of body and mind, involved in emotion], I then call the emotion an activity, otherwise I call it a passion, or state wherein the mind is passive."<sup>1</sup> In other words, not all 'emotions' are 'passions'; those most often so called are doubtless such, and, as such, are due mainly to 'external causes' (*i. e.*, they constitute our 'bondage'); but the emotions that not only accompany, but also help to sustain, our rational comprehension of things in their essential relations are not 'passive,'—rather are they 'activities' and constitute the only possible dynamic of the truly moral life. Our 'passions,' in Spinoza's technical sense (where we simply give way to strong feeling), are not only signs of our 'bondage,' but actual links in our chains, while our 'active' emotions, already bearing witness to the organizing activity of reason, are our only hope of 'freedom' and our only promise of the 'blessed life.'

Such, then, are the very important implications of Proposition LIX. The immediately following propositions are consistent enough with what precedes and wholly worthy of consideration, but they are hardly more than a clumsy introduction to Proposition LXVII: "A free man thinks of death least of all things; and his wisdom is a meditation not of death but of life."<sup>2</sup> Here, then, practically at the end of the Part of the *Ethics* ostensibly devoted to a consideration of "Human Bondage," we find the key-note of all that is best and most profoundly true in Spinoza's ethical theory. Perhaps this is the only perfect expression of "The Everlasting Yea"; certainly Carlyle's famous chapter with that title in his best known book is shrill and inadequate in comparison.

It will be seen that Spinoza's conception of moral 'activity' or 'freedom,' as opposed to non-moral or immoral 'passivity' or 'bondage,' has already been indicated in a

<sup>1</sup> P. 130.

<sup>2</sup> P. 232.



general way in Part IV, "Of Human Bondage, or the Strength of the Emotions." It is equally plain, however, that we must look to the concluding Part V, "Of the Power of the Understanding, or of Human Freedom," for both the further development and the vindication of Spinoza's ethical theory. The philosopher's mode of approach to his fundamental problem is not wholly reassuring. The Preface is mainly devoted to a rather acute criticism of Descartes' failure to reconcile his sweeping indeterminism with the necessary demands of the mechanical theory, to which (as was natural for its author) Descartes himself attributed an almost ontological character. But Spinoza begins (Prop. I) by reasserting what I have ventured to call the hypothesis of 'psycho-physical parallelism' in the most uncompromising terms: "Even as thoughts and the ideas of things are arranged and associated in the mind, so are the modifications of body or the images of things precisely in the same way arranged and associated in the body."<sup>1</sup> We have already seen that, taken as ultimately true, this postulate conflicts with that other one called for convenience the postulate of 'logical parallelism' (*i. e.*, "The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things"); for plainly it is one thing to assert the merely factual one to one correspondence of certain mental processes and their physiological (perhaps ultimately physical) correlates, and quite another thing to assume that the world-order is a quasi-logical order such that, in the last resort, cause and effect reduce to logical ground and consequent.

It is equally clear that one cannot at the same time and for the same purpose hold to the postulate of 'psycho-physical parallelism' and entertain even such a conception of moral 'freedom' as Spinoza himself is bound to contend for. This is simply another confusion of two distinct problems and correspondingly distinct methods. But almost immediately we come to a proposition (Prop. III) which is ambiguous and has led to much discussion: "An

<sup>1</sup> P. 247.

emotion, which is a passion, ceases to be a passion, as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea thereof." Here we must put ourselves in Spinoza's place, if we would understand him. It is, of course, a commonplace of modern psychology that it is difficult to deal with the emotions introspectively, since, in proportion as we become interested in the scientific problem, the emotion in question is bound to disappear. It is fair to assume that Spinoza, who presumably knew little or nothing of the technical difficulties of introspective psychology, is not here merely turning to the advantage of ethics a law of our mental life that tends to thwart psychology. On the other hand, nothing can be said for the popular misconception that Spinoza wished to rule out or transcend the life of feeling altogether in the interest of moral development, and that, in this proposition, he is merely pointing in that direction. The fact seems to be that, although the philosopher has just reaffirmed the naturalistic postulate of 'psycho-physical parallelism,' the distinction which he has in mind is essentially ethical rather than psychological. For psychology, as for science in general, there is no 'better' or 'worse'; here the implied distinction is that between mere 'passion' (non-moral or immoral) and that 'active' life of feeling where the organizing and transforming agency of reason is to be found. The one spells 'bondage,' which, as moral beings, we are trying to put behind us; the other, that 'freedom' which is our only hope.

The 'corollary' to this proposition helps to explain Spinoza's meaning: "An emotion, therefore, becomes more under our control, and the mind is less passive in respect to it, in proportion as it is more known to us." Robbed of their mystery and seen in their proper context, even our strongest passions cease to be mere 'passions'; and, speaking generally, our emotional life is capable of becoming progressively organized, and therefore 'active,' in proportion as we understand better our relations to our fellow men and to the world-order as a whole. As Spinoza remarks in the 'note' to the next proposition, "all appetites or desires are only passions, in so far as they spring from in-

adequate ideas; the same results are accredited to virtue, when they are aroused or generated by adequate ideas.”<sup>1</sup> And he characteristically adds (Prop. vi): “The mind has greater power over the emotions and is less subject thereto, in so far as it understands all things as necessary.”<sup>2</sup>

After attempting to indicate more in detail the principles involved in this progressive organization of the emotions, Spinoza proceeds to expound his conception of the ultimate synthesis. Proposition xv reads: “He who clearly and distinctly understands himself and his emotions loves God, and so much the more in proportion as he more understands himself and his emotions.”<sup>3</sup> And the following proposition reads: “This love towards God must hold the chief place in the mind.” While this ideal of ‘the intellectual love of God,’ taken as representing our supreme duty and, at the same time, as pointing the only way to the ‘blessed life,’ presents many difficulties, we are not here primarily concerned with the metaphysical issues involved and still less with their bearing upon popular religion. It must be frankly admitted that this apparent identification of the intellectual and the religious experience, when both are taken at their highest, hardly corresponds to any easily recognizable trend of recent thought.<sup>4</sup> Certain of the more ambitious

<sup>1</sup> P. 249.

<sup>2</sup> P. 250. It will be remembered that there is a serious ambiguity in Spinoza's conception of ‘necessity,’ but here he need not necessarily be understood as meaning more than that the world may and must be regarded as a knowable order.

<sup>3</sup> P. 255.

<sup>4</sup> In his interesting address on “The Real University,” delivered at the opening of Columbia University last autumn and published in the *Educational Review*, November, 1916, Professor Seligman says: “To many, . . . especially in this audience, the only church is the laboratory; the only religion is science.” (P. 327.) This passing remark is quoted, not because it really indicates the speaker's own point of view (for he suggests the necessary qualifications), but because it illustrates a popular use of language that is rather misleading unless it is clearly recognized as figurative. Of course an investigator in physics or chemistry might take a personal attitude of self-devotion, etc., toward his science that would have something in common with what is ordinarily meant by the religious



flights of Absolute Idealism might perhaps be cited as a contemporary parallel, but the relevance of the comparison would largely disappear when the necessary qualifications were made.<sup>1</sup> But, on the other hand, what may well seem foreign and dubious to us doubtless seemed plainly inevitable to Spinoza: no attempt at an ultimate solution of the ethico-religious problem could have seemed to him more in accord with his general standpoint and method. The fatal difficulty is that his characteristic standpoint and method involved that very confusion of categories to an examination of which this article has been devoted.

We must clearly recognize that, while Spinoza avoided the highly abstract ethical rationalism that was soon to be developed, and that was bound sooner or later to put rationalism itself at a needless disadvantage as a possible ethical method, he was, after all, a dogmatic rationalist.

attitude; at the same time, the fact remains that scientific procedure itself is as impersonal as the religious experience proper is bound to be personal (certain of William James's more paradoxical arguments to the contrary notwithstanding). That anything in our experience can be merely 'personal' or merely 'impersonal,' the writer would, of course, be the first to deny. So much for the figure of speech; if, on the other hand, it were conceivable that a scientific investigator should make a 'religion' of science to the extent of recognizing no human obligations or minimum limits of common decency, he would naturally be shut up,—the question whether he were criminal or merely insane, hard perhaps to settle, would after all be a relatively academic one. Perhaps more relevant to the main discussion is the remark of Carlyle that "the man who had mastered the first forty-seven propositions of Euclid stood nearer to God than he had done before." (Quoted by John Nichol in his volume on Carlyle, "English Men of Letters" series, p. 20.) If Carlyle had really meant this and lived up to it, he would have been elucidating Spinoza's meaning rather than propounding a paradox.

<sup>1</sup> There is no surer way of misunderstanding Spinoza than by assuming that he was a premature Absolute Idealist. He was an Absolutist, of course, but a good deal of water flowed under the philosophical bridge during the next century and a quarter, or more. Lest this be thought a criticism in particular of Mr. Joachim's already classic *Study of the Ethics of Spinoza* (1901), the writer begs to admit that he has learned as much from this admirable book, which he cannot follow in all respects, as from any one commentary.



His earlier statements as to the inevitable relativity of moral conceptions must not be allowed to confuse us on this point; for in the passages referred to he was really insisting upon the 'necessity' of the world-order from the point of view of mechanism, provisionally assumed as an ultimate account of the structure of the world as knowable. Here, when discussing the moral problem, he has unconsciously, if not consciously, shifted his point of view. The moral order is still regarded as, in a sense, 'necessary,' but the 'necessity' contended for is moral and not physical or quasi-physical necessity. Even when Spinoza was about to consider "Human Bondage," the Good, it will be remembered, was defined as "that which we certainly know to be useful to us," while evil was correspondingly defined as "that which we certainly know to be a hindrance to us in the attainment of any good."<sup>1</sup> What we call 'early rationalism' was for Spinoza simply another name for philosophy itself; and he naturally assumed that the rationalistic method was as applicable to the problems of ethics as to those of metaphysics. The real alternatives for him were ethical rationalism of the most thoroughgoing type and theological superstition, which he regarded as the enemy to be defeated at all hazards. This explains why he so readily takes refuge in what might seem the partly mystical conception of 'the intellectual love of God.' For him the only 'free' or 'active,' and therefore ethically or religiously worthy, 'love of God' must needs be this 'intellectual love,' since all other love for Him could only be a 'passion,' ultimately due to superstition. That religion could really involve a synthesis of experience on a higher plane than that of our emotions progressively purified in proportion to our ever-advancing intellectual comprehension of the world as a whole, he does not seem to recognize as a possibility.

It might seem that we have now considered, however cursorily, all that properly comes within the scope of our proposed examination of 'the confusion of categories' in

<sup>1</sup> Definitions I and II, Part IV, p. 190.

Spinoza's *Ethics*. At the same time, it would perhaps be thought an evasion, if one should omit all mention of the undoubted difficulties involved in the philosopher's attempt, at the very end of the *Ethics*, to deal with the 'eternity' of the human mind. Even the little that really need be said here requires a word of introduction. We are not directly concerned with the strictly metaphysical difficulties involved in Spinoza's conception of 'eternity,' including, as these do, not only the problem as to the place of time, but also that as to the meaning of 'reality,' in his system; and still less are we concerned with any speculation as to the possible reconciliation of Spinoza's apparent solution with what seems really fundamental in religion itself, as opposed to various forms of more or less popular theology. The question before us is wholly one as to categories or methods employed and their possible confusion.

From this point of view, the difficulty for the technical student of philosophy is almost the opposite of that of common-sense. An intelligent student of the world's literature, reading the *Ethics* as a classic, much as he might read Plato's *Dialogues*, would be likely to feel that there was something rather perfunctory in Spinoza's attempt to vindicate the 'eternity' of the human mind, after insisting so strongly upon the necessary connection between mind and body as to make the belief in any recognizable form of immortality the height of unreason. But what appears as a paradox or worse to common-sense must be recognized by the serious student of philosophy as rather a fairly logical corollary from Spinoza's fundamental assumptions, though a corollary which very strongly accentuates some of the essential difficulties of his system. No real student of the history of philosophy need be reminded that Spinoza's whole ideal is to view things *sub specie æternitatis*; but in exactly what sense the philosopher proposes to transcend the temporal standpoint is difficult, if not impossible, to determine. His over-emphasis of the mathematical method, as he misconceives it, is rather a defect to be excused than a possible means of vindicating his characteristic, if hopelessly vague,

position. Everything that 'necessarily' follows from the 'essence' of God or Nature, must be conceived as having a non-temporal significance and reality. This may seem plausible as a general statement; but, unfortunately, we have found that 'necessity' is a very ambiguous term in Spinoza's philosophy: we cannot afford to lump together logical, ontological, physical, and moral 'necessity,' if we would make any pretence to exact thinking. The underlying assumption seems to be that reality as a whole is essentially a logical or quasi-logical order, and that, therefore, to understand this order in its true nature is so far forth to transcend the temporal point of view. In spite of the fascination that more sophisticated versions of this ultra-logical assumption still seem to have for a certain type of mind, one must protest that this was the very fallacy that Hume, consciously or unconsciously, made forever impossible for his more discerning successors. And that is why philosophy has never been easy since Hume published his *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739-40). For those who naturally sympathize with what they regard as Spinoza's larger purpose, the temptation is great to over-interpret his meaning in terms of Absolute Idealism and invoke on his behalf arguments which one may fairly assume the philosopher himself would not even have understood.

Here, indeed, we find the ultimate conflict between the postulates of 'logical parallelism' and 'psycho-physical parallelism.' The former is, of course, fundamental for Spinoza's thinking as a whole, though so vague as almost inevitably to lead to inconsistent applications. This postulate, it should be observed, is ambiguous as to the significance of time for the system, though pointing in the direction of the non-temporal or 'eternal.' On the other hand, it is difficult to assign any definite meaning to the postulate of 'psycho-physical parallelism' that does not take time at its face value. And Spinoza clearly recognizes that, from this latter point of view, the 'eternity' of the mind is not even a problem. Proposition *xxi* is perfectly explicit on this point: "The mind can only imagine anything, or remember



what is past, while the body endures.”<sup>1</sup> The wording of Proposition xxiii, on the other hand, is rather unfortunate; Spinoza says: “The human mind cannot be absolutely destroyed with the body, but there remains of it something which is eternal.” Since ‘eternity,’ as understood by Spinoza, has no reference to time, but only to the ultimate ‘necessary’ order, this concession to the ordinary use of language is likely to be misleading.

But, while we find here an evident confusion of categories, there is no greater difficulty in understanding the philosopher’s probable meaning than there always is when he attempts to show the relation of the temporal to the ‘eternal.’ For (1) everything whatever has its ‘eternal’ as well as its temporal aspect: in this respect, the most insignificant<sup>2</sup> thing or event that could be mentioned is ‘eternal’ as well as the individual mind. But (2), as Spinoza says in the rather confused ‘note’ to this proposition,—after recognizing the impossibility of anything like the mythical ‘memory’ of ‘pre-existence,’—“Notwithstanding, we feel and know that we are eternal. For the mind feels those things that it conceives by understanding, no less than those things that it remembers. For the eyes of the mind, whereby it sees and observes things, are none other than proofs.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, the very fact that the mind is capable of recognizing non-temporal, *i. e.*, logical ‘necessity,’ makes it certain that the mind itself is ‘eternal’ in the same non-temporal sense. In this form, the argument seems not only inconclusive, but irrelevant.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P. 259.

<sup>2</sup> Of course nothing, in the last resort, can be regarded as ‘insignificant’ for a closed system where everything is ‘necessary.’ We have already seen reason to doubt, however, that Spinoza consistently keeps to the idea of a ‘closed system’ in the original sense.

<sup>3</sup> P. 260.

<sup>4</sup> Nineteenth century Idealism argued, with considerable force, that even our recognition of temporal succession involved something more than, and different from, a mere succession of ‘states of consciousness’ on our part; here, on the other hand, Spinoza seems to argue that the mind must be ‘eternal,’ in the sense that logical and mathematical truths are ‘eternal,’ since otherwise it could not comprehend such truths.



And yet Spinoza's intuitions seem to have been more sound, at any rate, than his logical procedure. Perhaps the religious side of his philosophy could be partly characterized by the words that Professor A. C. Bradley employs in his *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, when attempting to define the better side of Wordsworth's optimism: "The gulf which for Byron and Shelley yawned between the real and the ideal, had no existence for him. For him the ideal was realized, and Utopia a country which he saw every day, and which, he thought, every man might see who did not strive, nor cry, nor rebel, but opened his heart in love and thankfulness to sweet influences as universal and perpetual as the air."<sup>1</sup> In other words, the ideal does not merely point to an unknown future; it involves also an 'eternal' present.<sup>2</sup> Not only is 'the Kingdom of Heaven' 'within us': it is 'eternally' here and now, though the extreme of temporal evil may obscure its presence. The concluding proposition of the *Ethics* is one of the best of commentaries: "Blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself; neither do we rejoice therein, because we control our lusts, but, contrariwise, because we rejoice therein, we are able to control our lusts."

<sup>1</sup> P. 107.

<sup>2</sup> The immense difference, on the whole, between Spinoza's characteristic position and that of Wordsworth hardly needs to be mentioned: the mystical or semi-mystical apprehension of the 'eternal' realization of the ideal can only follow the most long sustained use of reason for Spinoza, while for Wordsworth it must come as a result of that 'wise passiveness' which he delighted to defend.

## HEGEL'S CRITICISM OF SPINOZA

KATHERINE EVERETT GILBERT

IN spite of the fact that some of the most important recent commentaries on Spinoza have attributed to him an almost modern concreteness, Hegel's interpretation of Spinoza as essentially an Eleatic is still commonly accepted. When his philosophy is classified or briefly summarized, the unprofitable theory of substance is likely to be emphasized. The term Spinozistic has even become a convenient designation of metaphysical abstractness wherever found. For example, when Professor Pringle-Pattison wishes to distinguish between the abstract and concrete phases of Mr. Bradley's theory of reality, he characterizes them as the Spinozistic and Hegelian phases respectively. Since it was Hegel who, by the extent and consistency of his criticism and from the vantage-ground of his own more synthetic theory, first stamped Spinozism as an abstract ontology, it is worth while examining his view in some detail if we wish to determine the justice of the entire interpretation.

In one important respect Hegel found himself in agreement with Spinoza. He believed that Spinoza had grasped correctly the first stage of a true philosophical procedure, for all valid philosophy must begin, as Spinoza began, with the doctrine of the essential unity of the world and the relative unreality of perceived things. We must abandon the common uncritical assumption that things are as they in the first instance seem, if we hope to learn the truth about reality. "The soul must commence by bathing in this ether of the One Substance, in which all that man has held as true has disappeared; this negation of all that is particular, to which every philosopher must have come, is the liberation of the mind and its absolute foundation."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, tr. by Haldane, Vol. III, pp. 257f.; see also *The Logic of Hegel*, tr. by Wallace, 2d ed., pp. 158f.

But just as a right beginning,—the renunciation of all that is determinate and particular and the restricting himself to the One,—“constitutes the grandeur of Spinoza’s manner of thought,”<sup>1</sup> so the inability to move beyond this starting-point is its weakness. The One must, indeed, sustain all that is real by being its foundation and essence, but it must do more than this; it must change itself into divergent forms and move in a process of development. The category of substance should be transmuted and exalted into the category of subject, spirit, or person; the clue to ultimate reality is the human consciousness. But as it is, Hegel finds the Spinozistic substance “rigid,” “unworkable,” “unyielding,” “motionless.” He contrasts with it Boehme’s conception of the unity of the Father as “an inward spring and fermentation,”<sup>2</sup> and his “originating spirits” which “energize and expand in one another.”<sup>3</sup> “Each spirit in the seven spirits of God is pregnant with all seven.”<sup>4</sup>

The dead and abstract character of substance implies a complementary abstractness in the particulars of the finite world. They are a “bare finite and adventitious congeries of existence.” They lie about as sheep having no shepherd. Substance lacks any principle of motion or individuation, and cannot show itself, therefore, as the truth and being of things. Since Spinoza cannot deduce them from his first principle, he is forced to assume them as immediately given in experience.<sup>5</sup> Strictly, therefore, his individual things are mere nothings, because they cannot be exhibited as determinations of that which can alone give them a degree of substantiality. This annihilation of the concrete world is the logical implication of the Spinozistic doctrine that all determination is negation.

Substance is an empty and independent universal; things are empty and independent particulars; the connection between them can only be one of absolute divergence or, in the attempt to combine them, absolute identification.

<sup>1</sup> *History of Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 288.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 202.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 289.



Considered as entities, things are completely separated from substance; that is, they are without being; considered as modes of substance, they are completely identified with it and lose their individuality; they are "cast down into this abyss of annihilation."<sup>1</sup>

There can be little doubt, I think, that in this criticism Hegel has set clearly in the light the weak side of Spinoza's philosophy. In the abstract ontology of Part I<sup>2</sup> of the *Ethics*, Spinoza fails to demonstrate any organic connection between the ultimate reality of substance and the concrete world of things. But of course a failure in achievement does not necessarily involve a corresponding inadequacy in theoretical ideal. To Hegel's reiterated criticism,—that Spinoza merely assumes individual determinations and does not deduce them from substance,—it may be replied that Spinoza at least repeatedly asserts the existence of such a development and sequence. He says, for example, that "from the necessity of the divine nature must follow an infinite number of things in infinite ways,"<sup>3</sup> or, as he paraphrases himself a few lines below, "From God's supreme power, or infinite nature . . . all things have necessarily flowed forth;"<sup>4</sup> and he characterizes God as the "emanative," "productive," "active," or "operating" cause of all his works.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, Spinoza has seemed to some critics to insist as strongly upon the doctrine of the evolution or emanation of God's nature as upon the affirmative character of substance.<sup>6</sup> This is not so slight a retort as might be at

<sup>1</sup> *History of Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 288.

<sup>2</sup> It was this part of the *Ethics* which chiefly occupied Hegel. He says that all Spinozism is summed up in the first seven definitions. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 263.

<sup>3</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. I, Prop. xvi; p. 59. Page references to Spinoza's writings, unless otherwise specified, are to Elwes' translation of the 'Chief Works,' Vol. II.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. I, Prop. xvii, note; pp. 60f.

<sup>5</sup> *Short Treatise*, tr. by Wolf, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> For example, Lovejoy, "The Dialectic of Bruno and Spinoza," *University of California Publications: Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 141ff. Saisset says that the sixteenth proposition, quoted above, is the whole of Spinozism; *Introduction critique aux œuvres de Spinoza*, 1860, pp. 38f.



first supposed, for it is doubtful whether, even with Hegel's emendation, Spinoza could do much more than assert that the development was logically bound to occur, if he were to begin with the type of principle which he actually employed. Spinoza's original premise was fatal to any kind of concrete conclusion. But this is just the point that Hegel missed. Indeed, in spite of the important differences in point of view, there is an interesting coincidence in the logical demands of the two rationalists which we shall proceed to examine.

Hegel, as we noticed, approved of Spinoza's initial standpoint. That there is one correct way to begin philosophical speculation, and that that way is by "bathing in the ether of the One Substance and negating all that is particular," both philosophers agree. As Spinoza's *Ethics* begins with the definition of substance, Hegel's dialectical unfolding of the pure logical idea begins with "thought in its merest indeterminateness, . . . the original featurelessness which precedes all definite character and is the very first of all."<sup>1</sup> Through a process which is supposed to express the inherent nature of reason, everything evolves for Hegel from this simple beginning. The category of being realizes itself in a comprehensive system of ideas which in some sense was all implicit in the origin. The objection that there are after all important differences in the two methods is not precisely relevant. It is true that for Spinoza reality was postulated in its completeness in the initial idea of substance, while for Hegel the largest part of reality was yet to appear when the first thought was given. But the point is that, for both, pure thought may properly begin with an empty category. There is divergence too in their theory of deduction. For Spinoza the succession of essences that flows from the fountain-head of being does not involve any idea of increase or necessary completion, but rather a diminution or falling away; for Hegel the rational process is the supplying of the indispensable implications of the original idea: but for both the sequence of thought is a deduction to this extent, that

<sup>1</sup>*Logic*, tr. by Wallace, p. 159.

the particular is evolved in a process of the necessary formation of concepts. It is not relevant, in the second place, to say that the *Logic* is part of a larger work and its standpoint deliberately abstract; its scheme is supposed to be identical with that of actual intellectual development. Hegel doubtless transcended his abstractness in his numerous discussions of definite problems,—of the state, the family, history, and religion,—but it is here a question of the logical ideal stated abstractly. Spinoza, too, gave content to substance and individuality to man when he was investigating the problems of the moral life, as we shall presently see.

Now in opposition to Hegel it may, I think, be maintained that it was Spinoza's preoccupation with a right beginning and an infallible deduction, and his renunciation of particularity, which were important causes of that very abstractness to which Hegel objected. The assumption, characteristic of early rationalism, that there was only one correct beginning and one correct procedure for thought, forced him to seek some idea which was everywhere relevant and therefore relevant exactly nowhere. Substance was posited in the attempt to give once for all the ultimate ground of all events, regardless of reference to particular purposes. It is a commonplace of modern logic that a cause or ground cannot be thus an unconditioned condition but must be teleologically determined; that is, its significance and scope are restricted by the significance and scope of the facts under investigation. The fruitfulness of scientific endeavor has resulted in large measure from the restriction of the attempt, and the annihilation of limitation is as fatal to philosophy as to science.

Let us turn from Hegel's favorable to his unfavorable criticism. Spinoza began right, Hegel says, but he failed to follow his first principle out into its determinations. How did Hegel propose to transform Spinozism to make it a true philosophy? He would supply a demonstration of the *modus operandi* by which necessary unity becomes free individuality. The abstract point of view of the whole is a legitimate beginning; the defect consists in not showing how the whole

moves from stage to stage in a process of self-realization. The instability and imperfection of the abstract category is the notion which Spinoza lacked. But by both Spinoza and Hegel categories are treated as if they had an inherent and absolute potency. Thought in the abstract has its own law of progression, whether, as for Spinoza, this law is taken from the analogy of geometry, or, as for Hegel, it is a dialectic with its thesis, antithesis, and synthesis; the thinking of particular human beings may acquiesce in or penetrate to "that core of truth which, originally produced and producing itself, . . . has become the *world*, the inward and outward world, of consciousness,"<sup>1</sup> but it can scarcely shape it or alter its significance. Spinoza speaks of the "happy chance"<sup>2</sup> by which some person might fall into the correct order at the outset of his reflection, and the development of rationality is for Hegel the evolution of the Absolute Idea in itself, to itself, and for itself.

Upon this special point, then, it would seem that criticism may be directed at both Spinoza and Hegel. The laws of thought cannot be reduced to a single order of categories or truths. Concepts are not powers, independent of their use in a specific investigation. Their satisfactoriness and importance depend on their capacity to meet a particular intellectual need; their function is not absolutely but relatively defined. In so far as Hegel pointed out the unfruitfulness of the conception of substance, he was doubtless right; but in so far as he would substitute for substance some other absolute or universal which should furnish an ideal method of thought, he was merely advocating one kind of rationalism, even if a better kind, in place of another. How speculation can start with an absolute whole, devoid of determination, and reach determination must always remain a problem. The point may perhaps be made more vivid by an analogy. The human figure represented in a picture has more points of resemblance with a living being than the background

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, tr. by Wallace, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *On the Improvement of the Understanding*, p. 16. The original reads *fato quodam*.



of a picture, and so the concept of spirit may designate more exactly than the concept of substance the concrete life of thought; but it is no more possible to elicit the functions of a living being from the representation of a human figure than from the background, and similarly the concept of spirit, so long as it is uninformed with the determinations of experience, cannot any more than substance give birth to a living process of thinking.

The most interesting consequence of Hegel's own point of view for his criticism of Spinoza is yet to appear. Hegel not only found abstractness in Spinoza where it actually existed, but, because of his own impatience with an empirical beginning, he found it where it was at least partially superseded by concreteness. In an interesting passage in his *Philosophy of Religion* <sup>1</sup> he says that Spinoza did not attempt any concrete science except ethics, and that in that he failed because its principles, content, and starting-point were taken from experience and not deduced from that substance which should have been its moving principle and method. It starts with what is perceived by the senses, Hegel complains, and so, although it may be logical enough in itself, it is a mere "ordinary science," lacking any unifying principle. If Spinoza had only conceived of God as a subject or creator instead of as a necessary foundation, human virtue might have been exhibited as a high manifestation of his power. But nature and human life are necessarily abstract if God is abstract; they must be the other incomplete, unrelated half of the universe. They are pure appearance, as God is pure being. Finite things have a false individuality because they are external to substance; and they must be external, because the metaphysical system has not shown them as necessary moments in an evolution. In this passage Hegel does not seem to admit that an empirical fact or sensuous datum may be a valid beginning for any genuinely philosophical investigation. It is true, of course, that Hegel stands in the history of thought for his insistence on the inseparability

<sup>1</sup> Tr. by Speirs and Sanderson, Vol. III, p. 327.



of thought and reality, and thought and experience, but it seems as if in passages like this his practice falls short of his best theory.

Now Spinoza himself, while always keeping in the back of his mind his ideal of a perfect, logical deduction, recognized its impracticability for particular matters of study. In his treatise *On the Improvement of the Understanding*, for example, he describes the progress of science in a surprisingly modern spirit. Learning the truth, he says, is like making tools. We make simple tools first and accomplish with them simple feats; gradually we make more complex tools, until finally we make complicated mechanisms. "So, in like manner, the intellect, by its native strength, makes for itself intellectual instruments, whereby it acquires strength for performing other intellectual operations, and from these operations gets again fresh instruments, or the power of pushing its investigations further, and thus gradually proceeds till it reaches the summit of wisdom."<sup>1</sup> Of course, Spinoza believed that, ideally, all reasoning should flow from the adequate conception of God, but he admits that this "never, or rarely, happens,"<sup>2</sup> and failing this ideal beginning, his instructions were to begin anywhere and achieve whatever was possible. It is conceivable, to be sure, that Spinoza might have recognized theoretically the necessity of limitation in intellectual endeavor and the importance of reference to experience, and yet in practice have left the determination of particular problems to rationalistic preconceptions. It was Hegel's opinion, we have noticed, that Spinoza's treatment of the moral life exhibits a sharp change in method, that he turns from rationalism to empiricism. This, I believe, is true if empiricism is broadly interpreted. We find Spinoza himself contrasting his method in Part I of the *Ethics* with his method in Part V. "Although in Part I, I showed in general terms," he says, "that all things . . . depend . . . on God, yet that demonstration . . . does not affect our mind so much, as when the same conclusion is derived from the actual essence of some particular thing." The superiority lies in the

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 11f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

fact, he says, that now "the manner and way" become clear to us.<sup>1</sup>

The true test of the validity of Hegel's interpretation appears at this point. Granting to Hegel that the content and starting-point of Spinoza's treatment of the moral life are taken from experience, does Hegel's conclusion follow, namely, that Spinoza's ethical system is applicable only to a world of appearance and possesses little or no philosophical significance? Or is it possible that Spinoza, in leading us, as it were, by the hand, from a consideration of particular things to a knowledge of our highest blessedness, so transforms his conception of substance and mode that at least a degree of organic interdependence is exhibited? If he did this, he not only transcended the abstractness of his own earlier point of view, a possibility which does not seem to have occurred to Hegel, but he did it by employing a method which Hegel considered fatal, by starting with man's experience instead of with God.

Spinoza's more abstract view of the relation of things to substance is that of a falling away, diminution, or emanation. God is necessary to things, but things are not necessary to God. It is difficult to see how they could stand otherwise to each other when the logical ideal is deduction. If true thought is bound to proceed by drawing particulars out of an original universal conception, the dependence must be one-sided. But when in Part V Spinoza comes to the analysis of man's power and virtue, he seems to become impressed with the truth that "the more we understand particular things, the more do we understand God."<sup>2</sup> Everything in the world, inanimate nature as well as animate, the actions of the wicked as well as those of the good, come from God and depend on Him in some sense, but they are not equally close to or representative of Him. This insistence on degrees in reality and distinction between a greater and less capacity to express God's nature is an essential aspect of a concrete view of the relation of things to God. On the basis of such

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. V, Prop. xxxvi, note; pp. 265f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. V, Prop. xxiv; p. 260.

a distinction Spinoza says that dependence on God may best be understood "by considering, not stocks and plants, but the most reasonable and perfect creatures."<sup>1</sup> "A mouse no less than an angel, and sorrow no less than joy depend on God," but the angel and joy are better indices of God's character.<sup>2</sup> If we ask what is most God-like in this world, Spinoza would answer: God is clear thinking, free activity, and joyful emotion. He *is* these things, for "Our mind in so far as it knows itself and the body under the form of eternity, has to that extent a knowledge of God."<sup>3</sup> When Professor Pringle-Pattison is criticising Mr. Bradley's theory of the Absolute, he identifies that phase of the metaphysics in which individuality is lost in the Absolute as Spinozistic, and that phase which insists upon degrees in reality as Hegelian. To call the loss of all individuality in substance the sum of Spinozism is to adopt the Hegelian interpretation as a whole, to say that things are dropped into 'an abyss of annihilation,' and to neglect what we may call this Hegelian aspect of Spinozism.

The objection may be raised at this point that Spinoza and Hegel meant different things by degrees of reality, that for Spinoza the conception signified nothing more than quantity of abstract being. If this were true, Hegel's objection would hold: "Mind to be sure is more than Nature and the animal is more than the plant: but we know very little of these objects and the distinction between them, if a more and less is enough for us."<sup>4</sup> But by saying that mind in its eternity is God, Spinoza meant that God is of that distinctive quality or kind that clear thinking is. Spinoza's statement that he will undertake to examine only those particular determinations of God which will help us to understand ourselves and our highest happiness,<sup>5</sup> prepares us for the revelation of an ideal experience which shall include clear thinking, free activity, and joyful emotion. We are to be led from the notion of things to the notion of perfection. This is, I think,

<sup>1</sup> *Correspondence*, p. 342.

<sup>3</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. V, Prop. xxx; p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 348.

<sup>4</sup> *Logic*, tr. by Wallace, p. 188.

<sup>5</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. II, Preface; p. 82.



quite in the spirit of some remarks of Professor Bosanquet, whose view of reality is unquestionably concrete; for example: "The general direction of our higher experience is a clue to the direction in which perfection has to be sought."<sup>1</sup> It is not strange that in this perfection or ideality the missing community of significance between God and His manifestations is found. But if it be found, we are far removed from the abstract ontology of the doctrine of substance, and Hegel's interpretation is only half true; for with mutual implications and identity of meaning between the universal and the particular the notion of their absolute separation is abandoned, and there is movement toward an organic view of the universe.

To develop this concrete phase of Spinozism it ought to be possible to define more or less in detail the ideal experience in which man and God meet. A complete demonstration of the manner in which man realizes God's nature and power cannot be required, for that would presuppose omniscience in the demonstrator; but the outlines of the method should be plain.

The organizing principle of the moral life, then, is reason or clear thinking. Good conduct is action in the light of adequate ideas. Exactly what does Spinoza understand the function of human reason to be? We have already seen that, ideally, reason traces a necessary connection of essences from a logical *prius*. Spinoza got this ideal from philosophical rationalism and from mathematics, not from observation of the ordinary organization of experience. But when Spinoza is confronted by a specific problem, his theory of the understanding undergoes a process of definition or concretion. It then becomes apparent that Spinoza's fundamental concern was not after all so much for the tracing of necessary connection in the form of deduction as for the realization of the necessity of the connection. What the Spinozistic reason cannot admit is the taking refuge in "the sanctuary of ignorance"; reality is intelligible through and through. It is not cause in general but relevant cause in which Spinoza

<sup>1</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 19.



is finally interested, explanation how an event came necessarily from a particular situation. For example, the remedy which he suggests for excessive appetites and desires is not a stiffening of the will but the perception of the conditions which give rise to the undesirable passion, the substitution of a complete analysis of the situation for a vague idea. An immoderate love of money or an over-concern with the arts of gain cannot be transformed into a saner emotion by the acquisition of the desired wealth, but rather by reflection upon the true sources of contentment, the true uses of money, and the measure of wealth which is necessary for our actual needs.<sup>1</sup> When a man realizes that the happiness which he has lacked is to a large extent within his own power, the true knowledge fills his spirit with joy. Wrath at an insult may be best overcome by reflecting on the ways in which human nature responds to different types of treatment. An imperfect theory would prescribe the return of insult for insult, but adequate thinking shows that the analogy of physical conquest does not hold in the world of free spiritual activity. "He who chooses to avenge wrongs with hatred is assuredly wretched. But he who strives to conquer hatred with love fights his battle in joy and confidence; he withstands many as easily as one, and has very little need of fortune's aid. Those whom he vanquishes yield joyfully, not through failure, but through increase in their powers."<sup>2</sup> "Minds are not conquered by force, but by love and high-mindedness."<sup>3</sup> Similarly lust and false ambition may be corrected. The seeker after virtue is to frame a system of right conduct for himself by imagining the particular temptations and dangers to which he is liable and by thinking carefully how they may best be met. These are illustrations of the fact that when Spinoza deals with a specific problem he conceives of the intellect as an organ of specific response and of the necessary order and connection of ideas as a concrete coherence determined by

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. IV, Appendix, xxix; p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. IV, Prop. xlvii; p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. IV, Appendix, xi; p. 238.

individual needs. Now the more a man grows toward perfection, the more extensive and pertinent his body of knowledge becomes; as Spinoza would put it, the more he is able to refer ideas and bodily modifications to the idea of God. If, on the basis of the doctrine of degrees of reality, we carry this conception of concrete logical connection to its limit, we reach the conception of God as the absolute coherence of thoughts and things. That is to say, the early dogma that "the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things" is converted through the agency of specific problems into an at least partially grasped notion of a concrete universal. Spinoza is half conscious of his method and half unconscious, but he comes nearer to Hegel's own organic view than Hegel ever admits.

The conative aspect of the ideal experience is called by Spinoza action as distinguished from passion and freedom as distinguished from slavery, and here the life of man and the life of God again meet. At first it is possible to observe only a general identity of meaning in the fact that "God acts solely by the laws of his own nature, and is not constrained by anyone,"<sup>1</sup> and that the free man is, of all particular things, least determined to action by outside forces and most perfectly explained, as to his conduct, by his own nature. That is, Spinoza rejected the definition of freedom as indeterminateness. As substance is that the very conception of which excludes the conception of any other being to limit it, so a free man is his own master and does not lie at the mercy of fortune.

But the similarity lies deeper. So long as it is found only in the lack of coercion from without and not in the character of the agents themselves, doubt is cast upon the very existence of the similarity, for how can the action of an insignificant creature be compared with the action issuing from the omnipotence of God? The contention must be supported, then, by a demonstration of the degrees of reality as manifested in active selves. In a word, free action is self-determination. But how comprehensive a thing may a

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. I, Prop. xvii; p. 59.

self be, and does it include a principle of development? The self is conceived by Spinoza not as a fixed and limited point, but as a principle involving definite relationships. In the first place, it is a social principle, binding man to his fellows. Free men are thoroughly grateful to each other through their identity of aim. If an act is willed by a consciousness in which this sense of social solidarity is highly developed, it proceeds as it were from a more comprehensive unity than the act of a man who holds himself in opposition to his fellows. But this principle is ultimately more than social; it is religious. It leads the expanding human consciousness through the feeling of union with his fellow-men to a feeling of his union with nature and God. "The endeavor of the better part of ourselves is in harmony with the order of nature as a whole."<sup>1</sup> In his treatise *On the Improvement of the Understanding* Spinoza describes his ideal as follows: "As it is a part of my happiness to lend a helping hand that many others may understand even as I do," so it is my chief good to "arrive, with other individuals if possible, at the knowledge of the union existing between the mind and the whole of nature."<sup>2</sup> Our conclusion is that the greater the freedom or power of activity pertaining to the self, the more comprehensive the individuality to which it pertains. If this be true, God, as the absolutely free, is the absolutely individual. Compare this interpretation with Professor Bosanquet's, for example; he says, "When freedom and spontaneity reach their climax in religion, the self no longer insists on its exclusive claim, and the whole being goes out together into the service which is perfect freedom," and, "It is plain that the height of individuality <sup>phase</sup> is to be looked for in experiences which raise to the acutest pitch the sense and fact of identity with man nature and God."<sup>3</sup>

Besides reason and freedom, there is the emotion of pleasure as a third thread of connection between human moral striving and the perfection of God's nature. It is one proof of the dependence of Spinoza's theory on empirical observation that he recognizes the fact that the stimulus of feeling

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. IV, Appendix, xxxii; p. 243. <sup>2</sup> P. 6. <sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 271.



is necessary to provoke action. Rationalist though he is, right reason, in the absence of the warmth of emotion, cannot guarantee virtuous conduct.<sup>1</sup> But surely pleasure, taken abstractly, may incite to any kind of conduct, and may accompany conduct remote from divine. The question arises for the third time: Did Spinoza recognize degrees of worth? There are in his theory two kinds of pleasure, the passion, which may be excessive or localized or dependent for its continuance on the continuance of an external stimulation, and which may quickly change into dejection; and the active emotion, which is simple and abiding and is the result of an enlarging vision and an expanding personality. We have seen that an individual may grow until he approaches God by means of the assertion of more and more necessary connections between things, and that finally he comprehends in his own understanding, as nearly as may be, the universal coherence of nature. There is no substitute for Spinoza's own description of the increasing joy that accompanies this growth in understanding. "The power which clear and distinct knowledge . . . possesses . . . causes the passions to occupy a very small part of the mind. . . . Further, it begets a love toward a thing immutable and eternal, whereof we may really enter into possession; neither can it be defiled with those faults which are inherent in ordinary love; but it may grow from strength to strength, and may engross the greater part of the mind, and deeply penetrate it."<sup>2</sup> On the whole Spinoza is here again forced away from his doctrine of an indeterminate substance, for he perceives that man, when affected by the highest type of emotion, is experiencing a divine experience. Just as the love of God is the crowning form of the emotional life for man, so God's love of himself is God's pleasure. "The intellectual love of the mind towards God is that very love of God whereby God loves himself."<sup>3</sup> It is in harmony with Hegel's own more concrete

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. IV, Prop. xiv; p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. V, Prop. xx, note; p. 258.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. V, Prop. xxxvi; p. 264. Even Hegel admits that at this one point there is some sort of logical connection between Spinoza's system



view of reality to say that God may be expressed in the essence of the human mind and that human understanding and freedom and joy are God's nature shining through particularity.

A sense of oneness with God is for Spinoza the spring of virtue in humanity. The source of virtue and virtue can no more be separated in Spinoza's theory than the reward of virtue and virtue. The realization of the unity which exists between man and the whole of nature is the positive and moving principle to righteousness, and blessedness is the sense of having acted in accordance with that principle.<sup>1</sup> Spinoza evidently neither separated motive and endeavor nor endeavor and fruition; they are all united in the ideal experience.

These are some indications of the concrete aspect of Spinoza's thought, and they are, it seems to me, a sufficient refutation of the strict Hegelian view that, according to Spinoza, God forever remains separate from His world and never pervades it, and that the moral struggle of man is a mere phenomenon in the abstract world of appearance.

of ethics and his principle of absolute substance; *Philosophy of Religion*, tr. by Speirs and Sanderson, Vol. III, p. 327.

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. V, Prop. XLII; p. 270.

## RATIONALISM IN HUME'S PHILOSOPHY

GEORGE HOLLAND SABINE

THE writing of the history of philosophy falls inevitably into certain conventional interpretations which serve the purposes of rough classification but which, for that very reason, frequently lead to formalism. Such classifications can never do more than schematize a few of the actual historical relations of systems and they easily become misrepresentative by what they leave out, and one-sided by what they include. A case in point is the usual interpretation of the philosophy which is universally described as English empiricism. Nobody can doubt that English philosophy from Locke to Hume represents the evolution of a certain point of view. But it is at best a doubtful terminology to pre-empt so broad a word as empiricism for this single period and it is positively misleading to represent the period as a self-contained process in which empiricism pure and simple came to its final expression.

It is indeed common to recognize that the immediate stimulus to Locke's philosophy was the Cartesian rationalism and that at most Locke was an empiricist only so far as his theory of the origin of ideas is concerned; his account of knowledge in the Fourth Book of the *Essay* is quite manifestly rationalist. This rationalism, however, is usually regarded as a foreign element in Locke which it was the problem of the later empiricists to remove. It is indeed a fact that Berkeley and Hume were largely engaged in following the lead given by Locke's Second Book. Berkeley's analysis of the visual perception of depth, his reduction of material substance to sensations, and his explanation of the physical order as a coherence of sensations may all be regarded in this light, as may also Hume's analysis of necessary connection in cause and effect and his reduction of

the self to a bundle of sensations. All these investigations were certainly, on one side at least, a search for the impressions from which ideas originate. In addition, however, it has commonly been inferred that the extension of this search over a broader and broader field meant that empiricism was gaining a more and more consistent expression. Hence it is often said that the logic of English empiricism completes itself in scepticism. "It is in virtue of the relentless faithfulness with which he [Hume] follows out the consequences of the empirical point of view that we are compelled to admit that in the *Treatise of Human Nature* the logic of empiricism works itself out to its inevitable conclusions. . . . He is an empiricist pure and simple, and he shows us with singular insight the ultimate meaning and consequences of pure empiricism."<sup>1</sup>

It by no means follows, however, that the extension of empiricism meant the extrusion of rationalism, or that this element of Locke's thought was successfully sloughed off by Hume. It is indeed true that Locke's rationalism failed to develop, and it is part of the purpose of this paper to show that this part of his philosophy was so devitalized, so false to the insight of rationalism as a living method in the hands of Descartes, that it was not capable of developing. But Locke's rationalism did not disappear, and it will be shown further that it remained as firmly imbedded in the philosophy of Hume as ever it had been in that of Locke. Hence it is seriously misleading to say that Hume was an empiricist "pure and simple"; such a view arises by neglecting the more or less tacit assumptions that lie in the background of Hume's philosophy but none the less effectively determine the nature of his conclusions. So far as his ideal of what ought to constitute true knowledge is concerned, Hume is almost if not quite as much a rationalist as Locke;

<sup>1</sup> J. Seth, *English Philosophers and Schools of Philosophy*, p. 150. The quotation is given merely as an illustration of the usual interpretation of Hume; Professor Seth goes farther than many critics in recognizing the effects of rationalism upon the English philosophy of the eighteenth century.



his extension of empirical principles consists largely in irrefutable proofs that the rationalist ideal is unattainable, a suspicion which Locke shared, though with only the most confused perception of its consequences. From this conjunction of ideals and results Hume's scepticism inevitably follows. His ideal of science is a system of judgments deductively related, while the materials of knowledge are sensations. Between sensations deductive relations are not discoverable, and the materials with which we work are therefore quite incapable of giving the results which the ideal demands. The point of view which we find developing from Locke to Hume is therefore not empiricism pure and simple, but empiricism on a persistent background of ill-conceived rationalism. Hume's scepticism is not the inevitable result of empiricism; it is the consequence of developing an empirical method and judging the outcome by a rationalist standard.<sup>1</sup>

In order to appreciate properly the influence of the rationalist ideal of science upon English philosophers, it will be necessary to observe briefly the source from which that ideal was derived. No other special science has ever dominated theory of knowledge to anything like the same extent as mathematics during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The unquestionable certainty of mathematical knowledge was universally recognized, not less by those who were called empiricists than by the rationalists. It appeared as obvious to Locke as to Descartes or Spinoza; the acceptance of mathematics as the very type of scientific certainty is indeed a common characteristic of the period, shared by philosophies otherwise the most diverse. With this exaltation of mathematics came, moreover, the conviction that the method of mathematics is the key to certainty in all sciences. This belief in a single, all-inclusive method was another common characteristic of the period. The mediæval lesson of universalism had not as yet been unlearned. It was not more obvious to the theologian that there must be one and only one true church than it was to the philosopher

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Windelband, *Gesch. d. n. Ph.*, Vol. I, p. 346.

that human knowledge must be all of one piece, developed throughout by the application to all subject-matters of a single intellectual activity. The failure of mediæval philosophy to create such a system, and the inadequacy of the Aristotelian logic to carry such a burden, were indeed manifest, but the ideal persisted and the hopes of the moderns centered for the time being in the method of mathematics. The classical expression of this ideal and the first systematic effort to carry it through is the rationalism of Descartes. In his early *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*,<sup>1</sup> he presents philosophy as a universal mathematics, a general study of order and measurement by a method which alone can improve the "natural light of reason" and thus do away with that patchwork of tradition, prejudice, and unfounded surmise which he regarded as the scandal of the accepted learning. How persistently he clung to this ideal of a universal method may be seen in the later *Discourse* and indeed in almost any of his writings upon philosophy.

A unanimity so general as this acceptance of the mathematical ideal can be explained only by a deep-lying cause, and this cause is to be found in the pre-eminent importance of mathematics in the method of the new natural science. This method involved, indeed, the systematic use of observation and may therefore be called in a general sense empirical, but its novelty depended in a far more profound sense upon the guiding of induction by the ideal of a mathematical formulation of results. The induction is directed essentially to the exact measurement of phenomena and to the discovery of constant numerical relations. This is the new form which modern science gave to the ancient ideal of simplicity and harmony in nature. The combination of deduction and induction is the new logical discovery of the physical sciences. Only mathematics offers a sound means of deduction; only measurement offers the means of really objective observation.

"What shall we say, Simplicio?" says Sagredo in Galileo's *Dialogues concerning Two New Sciences*.<sup>2</sup> "Must we not con-

<sup>1</sup> Written in 1628 but not printed until 1701.

<sup>2</sup> Tr. by Crew and de Salvio, p. 137.

fess that geometry is the most powerful of all instruments for sharpening the wit and training the mind to think correctly? Was not Plato perfectly right when he wished that his pupils should be first of all well grounded in mathematics?" And Simplicio answers, "Indeed I begin to understand that while logic is an excellent guide in discourse, it does not, as regards stimulation to discovery, compare with the power of sharp distinction which belongs to geometry." Again, observation guided by the assumption that nature must show simple mathematical relations is recognized by Galileo as the essential novelty of his own method when he points out, in the opening sentences of his discourse *De motu locali*, that he has created a new science dealing with a very old subject by bringing to light such facts as that the distances traversed by a freely falling body in successive units of time are in the ratios 1:3:5, etc., or that the path of a projectile is a parabola.<sup>1</sup> The triumph of Galileo's science lies in his conception of uniformly accelerated motion, a conception which led eventually to the clarification of the conceptions of mass and force, in a word, to nothing less than modern dynamics.<sup>2</sup> He described accurately the point of view of physical science when he said that the only qualities which we are obliged to attribute to things are figure, magnitude, and motion. The rationalism of Descartes derived its vitality from the fact that it was at bottom a generalization of the ideals which actually guided the scientific study of moving bodies. When he makes extension the essence of matter, he is merely saying what Kepler had said more picturesquely in his famous dictum, *Ubi materia, ibi geometria*. Rationalism was in a special sense the philosophy of exact natural science; it stood for the scientific achievement of the period in a way that English empiricism never did.

Thus we find at once the cause for the overshadowing influence of mathematics and the reasons which determined the form of Descartes' theory of knowledge. This theory turns upon his belief in clear and distinct ideas. The attain-

<sup>1</sup> *Two New Sciences*, tr. by Crew and de Salvio, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> E. Mach, *Science of Mechanics*, tr. by McCormack, pp. 128ff.



ment of knowledge depends upon observing the rule that nothing is to be asserted which is capable of being doubted. The first step, accordingly, must be the discovery of the simplest intuitive truths,—the simple aspects of things and the simple logical relations between them,—which by their inherent clearness and distinctness carry the guarantee of their certainty with them. Knowledge must begin with innate ideas or simple natures. This search for the simple is the secret of scientific success, as the vulgar tendency to depreciate the simple is for Descartes the fatal weakness of earlier philosophy. When knowledge passes beyond the simple natures it still proceeds by intuition, for deduction advances by a series of intuitions which bring to light the necessary connections between simple natures. Deduction, therefore, shares and extends the original certainty of our innate ideas, for each step is clear and distinct. Thus knowledge advances triumphantly from a fixed center, setting all in order as it goes, by constructing a single deductive system of concepts. It follows that knowledge of the senses can never attain this ideal, for the senses present us with highly complicated matters of fact. We find, indeed, from our experience that certain things occur together, but we are able to perceive no necessity in their connections, and consequently we do not scientifically understand them until we have, by a series of intuitions, logically interrelated the simple natures presented.<sup>1</sup> In practice it is the concept of motion which enables us to reduce the empirical variety of the physical world.<sup>2</sup> An adequate knowledge of the laws of motion would enable us to foretell sensuous qualities and to understand their necessary connections.

It is abundantly evident that the theory of knowledge thus formulated by Descartes corresponds in a very real way to the most fruitful scientific procedure of the time. The vitality of the mathematical ideal is derived from the closeness of its contact with the method of exact physical science. It is equally clear, however, that his statement of the theory

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Meditations*, II; tr. by Haldane and Ross, Vol. I, pp. 154ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Principles*, II, 23; *ibid.*, p. 265.

hovers always upon the verge of falsifying the method which gave it life. In the hands of a scientific genius like Galileo, mathematical formulation never loses touch with experience and induction; in the hands of Descartes the epistemologist, it too frequently suggests the evolution of experience from the mere logical manipulation of concepts. His distinction of clear ideas and confused ones constantly tends to become identified with that between reason and the senses, and as he advances in his theory of knowledge and his metaphysics, sense and reason become ever more sharply opposed. So long as he keeps himself in touch with actual scientific procedure, this tendency is held in check by his perfectly clear perception of the need for experiment and of the impossibility of using deduction as a substitute for experience. Consider, for example, the following admirable statement of the relation between experiment and logical construction: "In subsequently passing over in my mind all the objects which have ever been presented to my senses, I can truly venture to say that I have not there observed anything which I could not easily explain by the principles which I had discovered. But I must also confess that the power of nature is so ample and so vast, and these principles are so simple and general, that I observed hardly any particular effect as to which I could not at once recognize that it might be deduced from the principles in many different ways; and my greatest difficulty is usually to discover in which of these ways the effect does depend upon them. As to that, I do not know any other plan but again to try to find experiments of such a nature that their result is not the same if it has to be explained by one of the methods, as it would be if explained by the other."<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, in his theory of knowledge Descartes constantly tends to regard science as a product of pure thought which owes nothing essential to the senses.

- The ideal of a purely conceptual science thus established by Descartes is adopted without qualification by Locke. Between Locke and Descartes, however, there is this fundamental difference. In Descartes the ideal always had been

<sup>1</sup> *Method*, Part VI; tr. by Haldane and Ross, Vol. I, p. 121.

qualified by his first-hand knowledge of mathematics and its use in scientific investigation; in Locke it has the stiffness and artificiality of an ideal taken at second-hand by a man who has no conception of it as a working method. Locke adopts entire Descartes' theory of intuition and deduction and regards mathematics and rational ethics as the only subjects in which scientific certainty is possible. A science of bodies is flatly declared to be impossible because we cannot know the 'real essences' upon which the operations of bodies depend,<sup>1</sup> or as Locke sometimes says, because we cannot know the relations between the primary and the secondary qualities of bodies. Scientific explanation is thus naïvely equated with the scholastic search for real essences, physico-mathematical analysis with the pursuit of a 'cause of being.' Moreover, by an extension of the Cartesian dualism which consists in taking it on its least tenable side, Locke interprets Descartes' simple natures and their interdependences as ideas and the "connection and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas." The ideas of mathematics are 'archetypes of the mind's own making' and are certain for precisely this reason; so far as real existence is concerned, knowledge cannot go beyond 'probability.' In Locke's interpretation, Descartes' deductive science becomes a mental science and the ideal is completely emasculated, so far as its relation to the methods of physical science is concerned. The ideal is retained, but retained in such a form that it negates the very science whose method gave it vitality. With the unerring instinct of an amateur, Locke clutches all the easy abstractions in Descartes' account of his method and lets slip all the points of contact with reality which gave the method life.

The rationalism of Locke's Fourth Book was of a sort which offered no possibilities of development; the 'historical plain method' of the Second Book, on the other hand, almost immediately gave rise to a brilliant scientific discovery. This was Berkeley's introspective analysis of the visual perception of depth in his *New Theory of Vision*, 1709.

<sup>1</sup> *Essay*, Bk. IV, Ch. vi, § 11; Frazer's edition, Vol. II, pp. 260ff.



This discovery, as the successors of Berkeley were not slow to see, exhibits the true genius of the method which Locke had contributed to philosophy. What they did not see was that this method is not the empiricism of the exact physical sciences. The essence of Berkeley's discovery lay in the fact that he showed an apparently simple visual perception,—that of depth in the third dimension,—to be capable of analysis into various sensational factors which fuse in the production of the total perception. As Berkeley never tires of insisting, these sensational elements have no intuitable relation with each other; there is no agreement or disagreement between them. They merely fuse to form a compound qualitatively distinct from any of them, and no knowledge of the separate elements would ever enable anyone to deduce the nature of the compound. The fusion is exclusively qualitative; no possibility of measurement exists and mathematics is of no service whatever in the formulation of the results. The principle discovered is simply the statement of an empirical correlation, and it rests primarily upon the enumeration of instances. It is of course true that such empirical correlations are to be found in the physical sciences, but they are not typical of mechanics and it is sheer confusion to equate enumeration with experiment. On the other hand, correlation by enumeration is thoroughly typical of psychology, at least in its pre-experimental stage, and of ethics, economics, and political science. English empiricism was the empiricism of enumeration, that is, of the psychological and social sciences, which, far more than natural science, formed the intellectual environment in which English philosophy developed.

Berkeley's work confirmed the already existing tendency to identify empirical method with the counting of instances. It remained to be seen what effect this method would have upon the categories of cause and substance and how these categories, conceived as they were in the light of rationalism, would welcome the newcomer. It is at this juncture that Hume's theory of knowledge comes upon the stage.

Hume's theory of knowledge requires to be treated under

two aspects, his general account of the nature of knowledge, to which his very unsatisfactory treatment of space and time is in a general way subsidiary, and his analyses of bodily substance, cause and effect, and personal identity. The first of these aspects is commonly admitted to show the remnants of Locke's rationalism but it is supposed that this rationalism was laid aside when he went forward to the second aspect, which comprises the three great tasks of his philosophy. This is not, however, a fact; rationalism in the peculiar form given it by Locke remained to the end an essential factor in shaping Hume's conclusions.

In the *Enquiry* <sup>1</sup> Hume clearly divides all objects of knowledge into relations of ideas and matters of fact. To the first belong the sciences of geometry, algebra, and arithmetic; their certainty is either intuitive or demonstrative and the reason for this certainty is that there is no implication of existence in this sort of knowledge. It deals only with the relations of ideas. Matters of fact, on the other hand, depend upon a different principle, for the opposite of a matter of fact is entirely conceivable and involves no contradiction. Demonstration regarding matters of fact is impossible; our knowledge here rests upon cause and effect. In the *Treatise* this distinction and the corresponding classification of sciences is not used with equal clearness but it is everywhere made. The relations, contradictions, and agreements of ideas are asserted to be the foundation of all human knowledge, and demonstration is described as a type of knowledge so certain that it will not even tolerate a difficulty.<sup>2</sup> The name knowledge, strictly used, applies only to those relations which depend wholly upon ideas, while all inferences which involve real existence are to be called either proofs or probabilities.<sup>3</sup> The only substantial difference between the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry* is that in the former Hume includes geometry among sciences of observation, since it has

<sup>1</sup> § IV, Pt. I; *Essays*, edited by Green and Grose, Vol. II, pp. 20ff.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. I, Pt. II, § 2; pp. 29ff. The page references throughout are to Selby-Bigge's edition of the *Treatise*.

<sup>3</sup> Bk. I, Pt. III, § 1; pp. 69ff.; § 11; p. 124.

no exact standard of equality or other relations of quantity; algebra and arithmetic alone are recognized as exact sciences.<sup>1</sup> It is clear, then, that aside from removing the manifold obscurities and confusions in Locke's way of presenting the matter, Hume has not altered the conclusions in any material respect; he is in principle not a whit less a rationalist than his predecessor. There is not the slightest evidence that demonstration was for him less the ideal of what genuine knowledge must be than it had been for Locke. If he had little to say about demonstration, it was doubtless because a rationalism conceived in Locke's fashion left little to be said.

So far as concerns the method of the demonstrative sciences Hume has no more to say than is given in the passing remarks just alluded to. His discussion of space and time, which should naturally belong to this part of his system, is difficult to make anything of, because he crudely regards geometry as a science of mere observation, though it is not concerned with matters of fact or cause and effect. The fact appears to be that he had no settled convictions regarding the matter, for he does not hesitate to use geometrical theorems on occasion as examples of exact knowledge, in contrast with inferences based on causes. Unsatisfactory as the whole discussion is, one can easily see that Hume did not in fact apply the same method to space and time as to substance and causation. Despite his scepticism regarding geometry, he could not bring himself to regard space and time as fictions of the imagination, though his own account of them leads readily enough to this conclusion. His conviction that mathematics, even including geometry, is a real science, was too strong to permit him to lay irreverent hands upon space and time. Had he done so, the *reductio ad absurdum* of his own rationalism would have been too manifest.

The essence of Hume's account of space is his effort to derive it as a 'distribution or order' of colored and tangible points. Least visible and least tangible impressions are mathematical points which have a sort of mental substance

<sup>1</sup> Bk. I, Pt. II, § 4; pp. 45ff.; Pt. III, § 1; p. 71.



because of their visibility and tangibility but which are not extended, because they are simple impressions which could not be diminished without ceasing to exist.<sup>1</sup> The possibility of this curious notion is supported, be it said, upon frankly *a priori* grounds; it could hardly have been defended empirically. Space is a complex idea arising by the combination of these simple and unextended points; time is a similar complex idea derived from the succession of perceptions of all kinds. Now Hume is perfectly explicit in his statement that there are no impressions of space and time distinct from sensations of vision, touch, etc. These ideas arise only by attending exclusively to the manner in which colored and tangible points are distributed or in which impressions succeed one another. They cannot be conceived apart from these impressions, though we can attend to the spatial or temporal distribution alone. In this case, therefore, Hume qualifies his denial of abstract ideas in the same fashion as Berkeley. It is clear that his demand for an impression corresponding to the ideas cannot be satisfied any more than it can in the case of substance and cause. Space and time are fictions of the imagination just as much as the concepts which Hume calls so. The fact is concealed only because he confuses an order of points with the mere addition of them.

We turn now to the part of Hume's system which made up his real contribution to philosophy and which has been regarded as a pure development of empiricism, his analyses of cause and effect and of substance, bodily and mental. What Hume does in fact is to elaborate and clarify the proposition already laid down by Locke, that between a great part of our simple ideas no logical agreement or disagreement is to be found. In interpreting this proposition, however, Hume invariably follows another principle which also he derived from Locke, viz., that in order to make valid knowledge possible, such logical relations must be found. This proposition, which constituted the peculiar form of Locke's rationalism, is as persistently present in the so-called empirical parts of Hume's philosophy as in the parts already

<sup>1</sup> Bk. I, Pt. II, §§ 2 and 3; pp. 29ff.

examined. We shall now examine briefly the logical framework of Hume's arguments on cause and effect, bodily substance, and personal identity.

The course of Hume's argument is in general the same in each of the categories examined. He first shows that it cannot be derived from reason and then the manner in which it does arise from the imagination. Accordingly, the first step in his analysis of cause and effect is to show that the relation is not demonstrative; it is impossible to prove that every event must have a cause.<sup>1</sup> The chapter really centers about a bit of negative criticism of the kind in which Hume excelled, his exposure of the fallacy in the arguments of Hobbes, Locke, and Clarke to prove the necessity of causes. Aside from these criticisms, Hume's own argument is exceedingly simple. It consists in pointing out that as the ideas of cause and effect are distinct and therefore separable, it is impossible to proceed from one idea as cause to another idea as effect. No intuitive relationships exist which enable us to make this transition deductively. Hence, Hume concludes, cause and effect cannot arise from reason; it must therefore arise from imagination. This argument, which recurs again and again, gives us the clearest insight into the form of Hume's system. Only one test of rationality is contemplated, namely, the possibility of discovering implications by the mere inspection and comparison of ideas. A category not established by this test is attributed to the imagination, and what arises from the imagination is devoid of validity. The argument is the baldest form of disjunction; it leaves no place for degrees of validity or distinctions of method. Since it is manifestly impossible to justify cause and effect as a comparison of ideas, this is enough in itself to condemn causality. The conclusion is reached not by the empirical analysis of cause and effect but by the fact that no analysis of cause and effect can bring it into line with the pre-conceived principle that knowledge is nothing but the perception of relations between ideas.

The point is made more clear when we examine Hume's

<sup>1</sup> Bk. I, Pt. III, § 3; pp. 78ff.

account of the empirical origin of cause and effect. If we analyze particular instances of causes and effects, we can detect that the cause is contiguous to the effect and prior to it in time; in addition, we attribute necessity to the relation but in particular cases no ground for this necessity appears. All that can be seen beyond contiguity and priority is that the relation is attributed to objects which are constantly conjoined. Hume therefore infers that the idea of necessary connection is the effect of the repetition of these conjunctions. It is a habit of the imagination, the result of custom.<sup>1</sup> Now it appears self-evident to Hume that repetition can have no relevance to the validity of the relation. For this validity, if it existed at all, being detected by a comparison of the idea of the cause with that of the effect, would be as perceptible in the first instance as in the thousandth. On the other hand, if the relation cannot be detected, no number of repetitions contributes to its validity; repetition contributes only to the strength of the habit. The dilemma is perfectly plain: Hume's view of knowledge is such that the enumeration of instances is perfectly irrelevant; he is of course quite right when he says that geometry does not prove its theorems by observing a thousand circles and summing the observations. On the other hand, his analysis of cause and effect is confined to cases in which the enumeration of instances is not only relevant but substantially the sole method possible. Clearly it is a foregone conclusion that, if this procedure is judged by a standard derived from a quite different procedure, the result must be scepticism.

In order to grasp the peculiar logic of Hume's argument, it is necessary to perceive, first, that his method consists in placing side by side two extremely divergent theories of knowledge and, second, that these two theories, in so far as they have any basis in fact, are interpretations of two scientific procedures which in turn are the most widely divergent to be found. On the one hand, Hume's empiricism is not that of the experimental physical sciences, which were

<sup>1</sup> Bk. I, Pt. III, § 6; pp. 86ff.



a closed book for him as for Locke and Berkeley. Experiments carefully devised to offer a crucial test of rival rational explanations are in no wise mere enumerations of instances; as Mill observed long after, despite his inherited inclination to identify the empirical method with enumeration, one such experiment may be worth a thousand random observations. The certainty reached by this means is not at all a function of the number of observations. The enumeration of instances belongs more typically to those social sciences in which alone Hume and his English predecessors were at home. Even here, however, it is epistemological theory rather than scientific practice which identifies the method with enumeration of instances pure and simple. It was the peculiarity of English empiricism to neglect the hypotheses by which enumeration is guided, a neglect which rendered the English theory of knowledge seriously one-sided even where it is most clearly applicable. On the other hand, Hume's rationalism, like Locke's, was quite false as a theory even of pure mathematics. No theorem in mathematics is proved by the mere contemplation of ideas, even though the most extreme claims of mathematics to the character of an *a priori* science are admitted. Both Locke and Hume, therefore, had an erroneous notion of the scientific method which they conceived to be the only valid one. They had also an inadequate though not altogether an erroneous notion of the procedure of those psychological and social sciences of which alone they had any first-hand experience. The conclusions of Hume's system are the result of placing the inadequate view of one method beside the erroneous interpretation of the other and comparing them in the light of the assumption, common to all theories of knowledge of the period, that one method alone can be correct.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It should be insisted that this interpretation of Hume in no sense denies the fruitfulness of his analysis of cause and effect. So far as this was empirical it was indisputably fruitful. What was not fruitful was his wholly non-empirical prejudice against his own analysis. Instead of regarding the enumeration of instances as justified by the fact that for some subject-matters it is quite indispensable, he discredits it by a pre-

When we turn to Hume's treatment of substance we find that his conclusions are determined by an exactly similar discrepancy between erroneous ideal and inadequate empirical analysis. The form of the argument is precisely identical with that already used in reference to cause and effect. The senses do not show us body, because we never perceive anything except an impression. Moreover, the reason does not enable us to prove the distinct and continued existence of body. Hence the belief must be entirely owing to the imagination.<sup>1</sup> As the argument proceeds, we get a clearer insight into this incapacity of the reason; we can see what substance would have to be in order to be valid according to Hume's standard. In accordance with the principle used throughout his philosophy, Hume points out that all perceptions are distinct and therefore separable. Each perception is numerically identical with itself and distinct from every other, however similar in quality they may be. Our successive perceptions of any object possess these two properties of numerical diversity and qualitative similarity. As often as I see my table, I see the same shade of brown, but my seeing it at one time is numerically distinct from seeing it at another, if any other perception has intervened to interrupt the sight of the table. The similarity operates upon our imaginations to make us think the similar impressions are identical; the slightest attention to reason shows us that two perceptions separated by an interval cannot be one. Our experience being hopelessly at odds with itself, we feign an explanation which permits us to satisfy both tendencies: we attribute the identity to something we call body, which we imagine to exist continuously and independently of the perceptions, while we attribute the interruptions and discontinuity to the perceptions.

The burden of this argument evidently falls upon what Hume regards as the irrationality of the notion of identity as used of substances. It is neither unity nor multiplicity:

conception of what the method ought to be, though the preconceived method has no application at all.

<sup>1</sup> Bk. I, Pt. IV, § 2; pp. 191ff.

not unity, for the proposition, 'A body is itself,' cannot mean anything if the subject and predicate are indistinguishable; not multiplicity, for if objects are different, it is a contradiction to say they are the same. Identity, then, is "an idea which is a medium betwixt unity and number;" it means "the *invariableness* and *uninterruptedness* of any object, thro' a suppos'd variation of time."<sup>1</sup> Hume at once proceeds, however, to the conclusion that this idea, because it is a medium between unity and multiplicity, must be a confusion of them. Since different impressions are different and not the same, "the opinion of their identity can never arise from reason, but must arise from the imagination." The supposed continued existence of bodies is a fictitious identity, since the numerically different impressions cannot be the same, and this fictitious identity is the effect of the resemblances between the interrupted impressions. Thus after showing that identity cannot be the same as unity, Hume discredits it because it is not the same. The object is not a pure unit in which no differences are discernible, and consequently its supposed identity must be a fiction, while the rational ideal of identity as pure unity, though it never has a factual existence, is the only sense in which identity has any rational justification. The sceptical conclusion manifestly rests not on the empirical analysis of identity, for Hume's analysis is unexceptionable so far as it goes, but upon an unwillingness to abide by the empirical analysis after it is made. The category of substance, as Hume says, "has no other effect than to remedy the interruptions of our perceptions;"<sup>2</sup> it is called into being to remove a contradiction. Surely on any empirical grounds this ought to be enough to justify it, but the truth is that Hume was convinced in defiance of experience that substance ought to be a 'real essence.' Since it cannot be this, it must be "the monstrous offspring of two principles," a bastard born of the misalliance of reason and imagination. As in the case of cause and effect, it is the dead hand of Locke's rationalism that holds back the fruit of Hume's empirical analysis.

<sup>1</sup> Bk. I, Pt. IV, § 2; p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.



Hume's discussion of personal identity <sup>1</sup> follows so closely the treatment of bodily substance that it can be disposed of in a few sentences. Here also the empirical analysis, when allowed to stand by itself, is fruitful. At one blow Hume disposes of the monstrous assumption that a category so complex as personal identity is to be justified after the manner of Descartes and Locke by the appeal to an isolated intuition. He shows that what we actually mean by personal identity involves diversity and succession in relation, that it involves 'sympathy of parts to a common end,' and that it is of the same type as other concepts, such as the state, in which a functional subordination of parts is implied. That such concepts are useful and even indispensable Hume does not doubt. Nevertheless the identity of the mind "cannot run the several different perceptions into one and make them lose their characters of distinction and difference which are essential to them," and therefore the identity is fictitious; it is due solely to a confusion of relatedness with identity. It apparently did not occur to Hume that if personal identity could 'run the different perceptions into one,' it would have lost whatever usefulness it had. His criticism of the concept is entirely obsessed by the preconception that a concept is not justified by its empirical function in analyzing and relating phenomena but only by a sort of esoteric, logical self-evidence.

In conclusion, then, we may repeat what we asserted at the beginning, that it is a misconception of Hume's system to regard it as showing the inevitable logical consequences of empiricism. Even though we confine ourselves to the inadequate empiricism of English philosophy in the eighteenth century, it is not true to say that Hume was an empiricist pure and simple. The heritage of Cartesian rationalism, in the emasculated form given it by Locke, runs through it all and at every turn limits the fruitfulness of the empirical principles. The later history of English thought shows that, even on the narrow ground occupied by the empiricism of the eighteenth century, these principles were not incapable

<sup>1</sup> Bk. I, Pt. IV, § 6; pp. 251ff.

of great development. The associational psychology was in substance an extension of Hume's method of empirical analysis and, in spite of its glaring faults, it was an indisputable contribution to the empirical study of mind. Its achievements are not to be separated from the development of the Utilitarian ethics which, again allowing for all its defects, was the first incontestably modern theory of moral phenomena and an indispensable instrument in the progress of liberal political theory and the rise of economics. If it were true that Hume's scepticism is the final outcome of empiricism, these facts would be the most incomprehensible in the history of philosophy. They would mean nothing less than that the most fruitful applications of a set of philosophical principles were made after the ablest exponent of them had demonstrated their logical futility. So fantastic an hypothesis is quite untenable. If Hume's scepticism was not refuted by his successors, it was certainly neglected. With eminent good sense, most later English philosophers regarded his scepticism as irrelevant and devoted themselves to the elaboration of empiricism in those social sciences upon which English philosophy has always nourished itself. The final scientific fruition of these methods came in the biology of Charles Darwin, where they become the point of departure for a newer and more adequate empiricism. On the side of the physico-mathematical sciences a like result was achieved in the long run through the effect upon Kant of Hume's empiricism, though Kant also struggled more or less ineffectually with misconceptions bred of rationalism. In respect to both departments of science, the final outcome of Hume's philosophy was to destroy the false simplicity engendered by the radically non-empirical prejudice that one simple method can alone possess logical validity, though Hume himself remained entangled in this preconception to the last. This result was but a clearing of the ground for a more thorough-going empiricism.

## FREEDOM AS AN ETHICAL POSTULATE: KANT

RADOSLAV ANDREA TSANOFF

IN the history of ethical thought, especially since Augustine, the service into which the idea of human freedom has been pressed in connection with the problem of evil has brought the libertarian issue into the very heart of ethical inquiry and has tended to make the problem of freedom a distinctively ethical problem. Freedom and determinism have been referred traditionally to the department of morals. It is the purpose of this paper to consider whether ethics has anything to gain by identifying itself with the libertarian controversy, indeed whether or in what sense freedom can be regarded as an ethical postulate at all. To that end we shall inquire into the precise meaning and into some of the implications of the classical theory of freedom as an ethical postulate, the theory of Kant, and shall then consider very briefly the bearing which the results of this inquiry have upon the rôle and the significance of freedom as a notion in ethics.

### I

In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant undertakes to explain and establish epistemologically the universal validity of scientific laws and so to safeguard science from the embarrassment in which Hume's scepticism had placed it. The Transcendental Æsthetic and the Transcendental Analytic lead to the conclusion that experience is inevitably spatial-temporal. The categories of the understanding condition the possibility of experience; the world of possible experience is a necessarily connected world in space and time. Things-in-themselves are of negative significance for knowledge; theoretical reason can neither describe them nor deny their reality, since by definition they are trans-experiential. The universal validity of the laws of science is thus based on the



organizing rôle of the understanding, which makes experience and nature possible.

It is with such an epistemological background that Kant approaches the problem of freedom in the third antinomy of the Transcendental Dialectic. He attempts to solve this third conflict of the transcendental ideas by showing the compatibility of the thesis and the antithesis. The thesis declares: "Causality, according to the laws of nature, is not the only causality from which all the phenomena of the world can be deduced. In order to account for these phenomena it is necessary also to admit another causality, that of freedom."<sup>1</sup> Absolute spontaneity of causes is thus assumed in order to avoid the endless series of conditions which would make the completeness of the world-system impossible. The antithesis, on the other hand, asserts that everything in the world takes place entirely according to the laws of nature and that there is no freedom. The proof of the antithesis is unnecessarily obscure; stripped of involved verbiage, it amounts to this: a free-acting cause cannot be an event in the space-time world that we know, since that world is a world of necessary connection. The antithesis thus merely restates the conclusion of Kant's own epistemology.

Kant endeavors to overcome the conflict by reconciling the thesis and the antithesis: that is, by showing that theoretical reason can somehow maintain both without contradiction. Conceived as the faculty of beginning a state spontaneously, "freedom is a purely transcendental idea, which, first, contains nothing derived from *experience*, and, secondly, the object of which cannot be determined in any *experience*; because it is a general rule, even of the possibility of all *experience*, that everything which happens has a cause, and that therefore the causality also of the cause, which *itself has happened* or arisen, must again have a cause. In this manner the whole field of experience, however far it may extend, has been changed into one great whole of nature." But Kant goes on to say, "as, however, it is impossible in this way to arrive at an absolute totality of the conditions in causal

<sup>1</sup> *Kr. d. r. V.*, 1781, p. 444; tr. by Max Müller, p. 362.

relations, reason creates for itself the idea of spontaneity, or the power of beginning by itself, without an antecedent cause determining it to action, according to the law of causal connection."<sup>1</sup> The idea of freedom is created by pure theoretical reason for the purpose of arriving at an absolute totality of the conditions in causal relations. That is to say, Kant admits the claim of the antithesis and then proceeds to make room for freedom by demanding absolute completeness for the world-system. In doing this, however, he violates the first condition upon which the antithesis rests its argument, namely, that the world of experience is not an absolutely complete system, but a system of uniformity in which any event A is regarded as the effect of some other event B, and that in turn the effect of some other event C, and so on *ad indefinitum*. The same Kantian epistemology which makes free spontaneity inadmissible in the causal series of experience precludes the notion of an absolute totality of that series. Kant's theory of experience, therefore, justifies the antithesis of the third antinomy, since it is concerned only with experience and knows nothing positive about things-in-themselves.<sup>2</sup>

All empirical libertarianism has, accordingly, been discredited. In the sphere of theoretical philosophy, freedom remains only as an abstract notion with metaphysical implications, and Kant is satisfied if he can merely entertain the notion of freedom without logical self-contradiction. Indeed, this indecision in which the theoretical reason leaves the problem is precisely in line with Kant's position, since it prepares the way for what he considers the true and real establishment of human freedom, which properly is not a theoretical but an ethical notion, a postulate of practical reason.

<sup>1</sup> *Kr. d. r. V.*, 1781, p. 533; tr. by Max Müller, pp. 432f.

<sup>2</sup> This, of course, is Schopenhauer's conclusion. Cf. in this connection Schopenhauer's *Werke*, Grisebach Edition, Vol. I, pp. 632f.; Haldane and Kemp's translation of *The World as Will and Idea*, Vol. II, pp. 111ff. Cf. also the present writer's *Schopenhauer's Criticism of Kant's Theory of Experience*, pp. 57ff.

"If freedom is to be a property of certain causes of phenomena, it must, as regards these, which are events, be a faculty of beginning them *from itself* (*sponte*), that is, without the causality of the cause itself beginning, and hence without requiring any other ground to determine its beginning. But then the *cause*, as to its causality, must not rank under time-determinations of its state; that is, *not be a phenomenon*, and must be considered as a thing *per se*, and its *effects* only as phenomena. If we can think such an influence of the things of understanding (*Verstandeswesen*) on phenomena without contradiction, then natural necessity will attach to all connexion of cause and effect in the sensuous world, but, on the other hand, freedom can be granted to such cause, as is itself not a phenomenon (though the basis of one). Nature therefore and freedom can without contradiction be attributed to the very same thing, but in different relations—on one side as a phenomenon, on the other as a thing *per se*." <sup>1</sup>

This is a typical passage. The problem becomes one of discovering in our nature some fact which, transcending experience in its implications, would necessarily involve freedom as a rational postulate. This fact Kant finds in the categorical imperative, in the unconditional 'ought.' The moral law differs from the laws of nature, for, while these are all hypothetical and valid only within their particular spheres of reference, it possesses unconditional obligation. On that very account it cannot be grounded in experience, since experience, as Kant has defined it, is a system of relations in which everything depends on something else. The entire content of experience, accordingly, is relative in character, and thus incapable of providing a fundamental principle of morals. Nothing can be called good without qualification except a Good Will, that is, a purely rational will, conceivably autonomous, operating in the realm of pure ideas. Such a will recognizes the sublimity of its rational

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena, Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 344; tr. by Mahaffy and Bernard, pp. 109f. All references to Kant's *Werke* are to the edition by the Prussian Academy.



essence but it also feels the fetters of sense. Hence the significance of the categorical imperative. "What makes categorical imperatives possible is this, that the idea of freedom makes me a member of an intelligible world, in consequence of which, if I were nothing else, all my actions *would* always conform to the autonomy of the will; but, as I at the same time intuit myself as a member of the world of sense, they *ought* so to conform."<sup>1</sup>

Morality thus arises out of the conflict between our empirical and our intelligible characters. The categorical nature of moral obligation indicates the pure rationality of the will which it moves; it therefore transcends the empirical world of necessity and implies freedom. But its imperative character, the very idea of *ought*, implies the uncongeniality of the sphere of sense-experience in which the ideally free will actually operates. Thus the one fact of moral obligation logically necessitates the postulation of human nature as at once determined and free, determined by the necessity of the phenomenal *nexus* in which it is involved, yet acting spontaneously in its noumenal capacity. That which theoretical reason could only conceive as a mere concept,—the notion of a two-faced character and of a twofold world,—practical reason has now demonstrated as a certainty. Theoretically we are not prohibited from entertaining the notion of freedom; ethically we are compelled to maintain it, if morality is to have any significance. This, in the main, is Kant's theory of freedom as an ethical postulate.

While the above account indicates what appears to be Kant's distinctive theory of freedom, we find in his works a variety of statements suggesting a possible vacillation on Kant's part with regard to the problem before us. It would be possible to interpret Kant's language occasionally as implying the belief in psychological freedom or in self-determinism; but psychological freedom is out of harmony with the fundamental tenor of Kant's ethical system, for the individual's motives are themselves involved in the intricate *nexus* of conditioned events in experience and can-

<sup>1</sup> *Grundlegung, Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 454; tr. by Abbott, pp. 73f.

not provide the basis for an ethical doctrine of freedom in the Kantian sense. Kant has been thoroughly consistent in tracing the strands of necessity through the entire fabric of experience and has left no room for psychological freedom in his system. He distinctly repudiates it in the second *Critique*.<sup>1</sup> Again, he defines freedom as "the faculty of a cause to determine itself to action, untrammelled by sense conditions," and as "the independence of causality from the conditions of space and time."<sup>2</sup> It is not easy to ascertain the precise significance of such definitions. Does Kant mean to imply a capacity in each individual of freely intruding into the causal series, that is to say, of actually producing empirical effects in defiance of the causal system? One would hesitate even to suggest such an interpretation were it not for the fact that Kant himself, in a passage in the second *Critique*, speaks of man's capacity to have left undone an action that he has performed,<sup>3</sup> in a way ominously reminiscent of the old scholastic freedom of indifference. This view of freedom, however, as the context of the passage in question itself clearly shows, is so obviously out of place in Kant's philosophy that it may forthwith be dismissed.

But, if the possibility of beginning a new causal series within or alongside of the phenomenal *nexus* is thus ruled out, it may yet be possible to originate spontaneously the very ground of causation. Every event in experience may of necessity be the effect of a cause, and still the causal system itself may conceivably be grounded in a spontaneous act of freedom. This point of view, however, reveals a difficulty regarding the relation of the empirical nature of man to his intelligible character, a difficulty which seems to cripple Kant's entire argument. It may be stated briefly thus: Kant calls our attention to a Janus-like personality, one face turned toward the phenomenal world of necessary

<sup>1</sup> *Kr. d. pr. V.*, *Werke*, Vol. V, pp. 93ff.; tr. by Abbott, pp. 187ff.

<sup>2</sup> Observations 1533, 1541 (Kant's *Reflexionen*). I quote from Professor Felix Adler's paper, "A Critique of Kant's Ethics," *Mind*, N. S., Vol. XI, 1902, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> *Kr. d. pr. V.*, *Werke*, Vol. V, p. 98; tr. by Abbott, p. 191.

connection, the other freely directing its gaze toward the eternal course of reason. Man's empirical character is thoroughly involved in the causal order, as truly subject to scientific calculation as are the orbits of the celestial bodies, while his intelligible character is purely rational, spontaneously active in the noumenal realm of ideas, sublimely independent of the causal system, and indeed originating the very basis of that system. And yet these two characters, each of which is the negation of the other, are not to be regarded as being out of touch. The intelligible character is hampered by the empirical; wherefore arises the categorical imperative of unconditional obligation, 'Thou oughtest'; but ideally the intelligible character also dominates the empirical, whence springs the moral faith, 'Thou canst.'

Kant's own reasoning apparently leads from the fact of the categorical imperative to the conclusion of the dual character of man and the postulate of transcendental freedom. We need not press here the question whether, in deriving these two conceptions, he is involved in a circle, a charge against which he defends himself in the *Grundlegung*.<sup>1</sup> The real difficulty is to be found in this, that Kant, while upholding the unquestioned reality of the moral fact upon which he bases his theory, nevertheless claims as an argument of the first importance that his theory of transcendental freedom is not inconsistent with the demands of theoretical reason. Has he succeeded in establishing this latter contention? Can the mind think of a timeless, free, intelligible character directing and affecting a temporal, determined, empirical character? If it does actually affect it, it must do so in the medium of time, which is the only medium in which the empirical character can be affected, and in that case it must itself enter into the temporal series, which it by definition transcends. And if, starting the other way, we conceive of the intelligible character as affecting the empirical without descending from its timeless sublimity, then we are forced to the conclusion that the empirical character, existing in time, points to and demands an over-phenomenal, time-

<sup>1</sup> *Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 453; tr. by Abbott, p. 72.



less explanation, a claim diametrically opposite to the conclusion of Kant's epistemology. In other words, Kant's theory of the empirical and the intelligible character, which is involved in his notion of transcendental freedom, does contain a theoretical self-contradiction so long as we regard the intelligible character, and thus freedom, as in any way actually operative in human conduct.

Moreover, the intelligible character itself, just because of its pure rationality, appears incompatible with freedom in any intelligible sense. That which the ideally good will *would* do, and which the good will, hampered by the impediments of sense-experience, *ought* to do, is by no means absolutely elective. It is the inevitable expression of the will's rationality. Kant has pushed the entire discussion one step back, but there the same issue confronts us. In what sense is the individual free, if his empirical character is a link in the causal chain, and his intelligible character the immutable manifestation of eternal reason? Thus considered, Kant's theory not only does not overthrow determinism, but indeed reaffirms, enlarges upon, and universalizes it. Psychological determinism denies the actuality of freedom in the world of experience. This denial Kant's epistemology validates. To this conclusion of empirical determinism of the antithesis in the third antinomy, Kant now virtually adds a metaphysical theory which excludes freedom from the eternal essence of human nature, with which essence the empirical determinist has not concerned himself at all.

All this contention, be it repeated, holds good only if we interpret Kant to mean that the intelligible character is actually operative in the world of experience. A Kantian libertarian may protest, however, that, in proceeding from the standpoint of theoretical reason, we have violated Kant's chief injunction. This protest is entirely just, for Kant upholds the primacy of practical reason and insists that, if we start from experience and theoretical reason, we can never prove the actuality of freedom, which is a postulate of practical reason grounded in the moral fact of categorical obliga-

tion. But the violation of Kant's injunction is also justified because of his contention that his doctrine of transcendental freedom does not involve any theoretical contradiction.

Once more we are advised to stand upon the solid rock of the categorical imperative, the one immutable support of any true theory of morality and freedom. Let us accordingly examine our problem with reference to this proposed base. Is this 'ought' a fact of consciousness? That would hardly do, for in such a case it would be empirical, psychological, and therefore unfit to serve as a foundation for a categorical ethics or for a purely rational theory of freedom. But if it is not a fact of consciousness, what is it? How did Kant arrive at it? How can it be instrumental in unconditionally compelling human conduct unless it relates itself to the empirical consciousness? And how can it do that if it completely transcends it? Again, how is Kant's argument to appeal to the man who, unfortunately, discovers no such categorical imperative in himself? It is readily granted that one would be responsible if he transgressed the categorical imperative which he recognized in his moral nature. But how is one to be held responsible for the absence from his nature of the imperative which is professedly the very source and ground of all responsibility? To be sure, Kant claims as the unique characteristic of his categorical imperative that it precludes any questions as to its justification or origin. An orthodox Kantian rules all the above questions out of court. But what is an orthodox Kantian to say to a man who does not even understand the language of the categorical ethics? Is he to cast him into the outer darkness as a creature forever incapable of morality? In that case the creature thus cast out may turn and openly challenge the categorical excommunicator, branding him, Nietzsche-wise, as morally diseased. In such a conflict one is at a loss to think of a possible arbiter. Or is there a way in which a man may finally be led to a recognition of this categorical fact? Then it would seem that the recognition of the categorical imperative can be attained by the empirical path, which fact

would deprive Kant's ethical theory of its unconditional foundation.

There is no refuge from this dilemma in any appeal to the general consciousness of responsibility. It is true that the average human being is inclined to accept praise or blame for his actions, but this tendency in human nature is itself after all an empirical fact, and its analysis can yield ethical truth only to him who does not reject an empirically grounded ethics. To the moralist who turns his back on experience the sense of responsibility may be the utterance of the moral 'ought' of the *homo noumenon*; but, the unbeliever rejoins, it may with equal probability be the last vestige of superstition. Men considered themselves responsible and were praised or blamed by others for things which the progress of human knowledge has shown to be mere illusions of ignorance. We no longer burn witches for starting pestilences, nor do we burn candles to saints and holy men for blessing our crops. Science is weaving more and more closely the fabric of causal connections. Whether it can banish from the consciousness of man the sense of responsibility itself is not a matter to prophesy about, but assuredly it is a possible alternative which can be accepted or rejected only on the basis of experience. At any rate, few theories leave moral responsibility in so ambiguous a position as Kant's doctrine of the empirical and the intelligible character. How can an intelligent man regard himself in any way 'responsible' (in the Kantian sense) for an act which, on its empirical side, is a necessary link in a causal chain in which he himself is thoroughly entangled and, on its noumenal side, is the expression of his intelligible character, which is the inevitable manifestation of eternal reason? These are some of the difficulties in which the notion of the categorical imperative is involved; they show the actual uncertainty of the supposedly unquestionable fact upon which Kant depends for the basis of his whole theory of transcendental freedom.

It thus appears that, if we interpret Kant's freedom as actual and the intelligible character as truly influencing the



empirical,—that is to say, if we regard Kant's moral law as indeed legislating in the realm of human conduct,—we are involved in radical inconsistencies from which no escape seems possible. It has also been seen that such an interpretation of Kant's theory not only does not overthrow scientific determinism, but indeed reaffirms and universalizes it and provides it with a metaphysical substructure. If we are bound in search of freedom, therefore, we seem compelled to accept the other interpretation to which Kant's elastic theory lends itself, namely, that the ideas of the moral law and transcendental freedom are not to be regarded as certainties but only as practical postulates. We are to act *as if* we were legislators in the moral world. That is to say, we have been forced to reject as possible alternatives empirical freedom of choice, the actual power of spontaneously inaugurating a causal series, or even of freely originating the basis of the system of necessity itself. We ask now, not whether one's acts are the acts of a free man, but whether his attitude towards his acts is the attitude of a free man.

In this sense freedom is not the characteristic of certain acts, of certain specific events, nor yet does it refer to a noumenal substrate of the entire causal series. It expresses itself rather in a certain point of view from which we may regard every act of ours. So Kant himself wrote in the *Prolegomena*: "I may say without contradiction: that all actions of rational beings, so far as they are phenomena (occurring in any experience), are subject to the necessity of nature; but the same actions, as regards merely the rational subject and its faculty of acting according to mere Reason, are free."<sup>1</sup> We may regard our every act *as if* it were the act of a free rational will. Our very rationality would show us, on every occasion, that such is not the case; but the ethical assertion of our freedom in the face of actual necessity changes our whole attitude toward our acts and thus elevates us; we become, if not legislators and executives in the field of human conduct, at least its ethical judges. Our acts are what they are but we are free in that we may

<sup>1</sup> *Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 345; tr. by Mahaffy and Bernard, p. III.

rise above our acts and pronounce judgment upon them. We may thus ideally raise our very acts from the level of necessity to the plane of freedom. But only ideally, only as a postulate of practical reason is transcendental freedom admissible. In the same way as Epictetus, though in shackles, was yet a free man, so our ethical will may perform its part in the necessary machinery of human action and yet maintain towards it an attitude of true liberty.

This is a complete swing of the pendulum of argument; from the freedom of the act we have passed to the freedom of the agent, or rather to his ideally free attitude. It would be misunderstanding Kant, however, if we said that such a moral agent recognizes his acts as necessarily determined, yet comforts himself with his idea of being free anyhow. No, it is the empirical subject that feels the pressure of necessity; the moral will manifests its morality precisely in this attitude of freedom towards its acts. That is its ethical essence. Our acts are the expression and inevitable result of our being; *operari sequitur esse*. We actually do what we must do, what we cannot help doing. But our ethical attitude towards our conduct is free, in the sense that we evaluate and pronounce judgment; we ought to act *as if* we were free agents. This seems to be the last form which Kant's theory of transcendental freedom assumes.

Yet how is even this attitude of the will towards its acts intelligibly free? If this attitude is essential to all moral-rational beings, as Kant claims, then it is hard to see in what sense it could be regarded as spontaneous. For if it is the essence of our moral nature to judge what we ought to do in accordance with the idea of the moral law, then our judgment of *ought* is itself a *must*; our ethical will 'freely' judges in the way in which it eternally must judge. And this *must* into which the ethical *ought* has changed is in no way generically different from the *must* of the scientific law. The scientific law formulates relations which express the inevitable coherence of organic experience. The maxim of the moral will, its categorical imperative, is likewise the formulated expression of its inevitably rational character. On

the other hand, should we refuse to admit Kant's claim that this 'free' attitude of the agent is essential to human nature, Kant would be confronted with the dilemma encountered above in connection with the categorical imperative; he would be forced either to seek uncertain refuge in the relativism of empiricist ethics or risk abandoning his whole position.

Kant's so-called theory of freedom is indeed, in spite of Kant, virtually a theory of determinism. It validates the contention of the antithesis in the third antinomy. Regarded as actually originating the timeless basis of the causal series, it involves us in insuperable difficulties and, in its implications, points not to actual freedom but to what is almost fatalism. Interpreted, on the other hand, as an ethical attitude, an 'as if,' freedom becomes a defiantly resigned consciousness of determinism.

## II

The first radical defect of Kant's ethical system is due to his very conception of the scope and of the rôle of morality. A morality which seeks its basis above, that is, apart from, the world of possible experience, is a morality which, in its first chapter, would appear free from the impediments of space-time necessity, and which on that account would admit of a more sublime statement than is possible in the case of a morality grounded in experience. But this apparent freedom from empirical entanglements, so sublime in prospect, shows itself illusory in the last chapter. A morality exalted above experience finds the noumenal dignity of its laws impaired by the fact that they fail to have any meaning in the very sphere in which they are to apply. Transcending experience and yet not conditioned by experience, such a morality has itself no meaning for experience and is therefore an illusory morality. The 'as if' of Kant's system means either too little or too much: The moral law either applies really in the empirical sphere, in which case the description of the moral law and of the empirical sphere must be revised so as to make possible their organic relation; or else the moral



law does transcend the empirical sphere, in which case its 'as if' application to experience is the naïve illusion of our moral consciousness. The notion of freedom, noumenally regarded, is seen to change before our very eyes into a notion of determinism. Estimated in terms of our experience, Kant's ethics is too remotely sublime to affect our lives, and his freedom too elusive to explain our moral strivings.

Should we, accordingly, read all noumenalism out of Kant's ethics and find its true core in the empirical consciousness of duty and responsibility, then his notion and his treatment of freedom would require a radical revision. The problem of bringing Kant's ethics down to earth in a way consistent with the fundamental spirit of the Critical Philosophy,—“the Holy Ghost in Kant,”—is a problem too complex to be undertaken here. The above discussion has perhaps thrown some light on the true significance of freedom as a notion in ethics, and it may be worth while, in conclusion, to indicate that significance in very broad outline.

In championing freedom as a *sine qua non* of morality and in thus condemning moral inquiry to the futilities of the freedom controversy, the libertarians have been to a large degree responsible for the barren dogmatism which has characterized so much of ethical thought. The Christian doctrine of salvation, requiring the recognition of the reality of evil in this world, required also that it be not laid at God's door and accordingly demanded freedom as a prime condition of explaining the ethical course of man. A hoary dogmatism, theological in its origin, which isolated man from God above and from nature about him and treated the human soul as *sui generis* and transcending the world of things, led ethical speculation into the quandary of being compelled to treat the human will as affecting the course of nature and yet remaining unaffected by it or by its inadequately conceived law-conforming mechanism. The scientific and philosophical implications of this dogmatism, insufficiently appreciated during the period of theological domination in European thought, became increasingly manifest as modern science proceeded to establish on solid foundations the con-

ception of the world as a law-conforming system and to banish the notion of absolute chance. The realization of these implications, involving ethics in the conflict between freedom and determinism, and indeed making the issue of this conflict vital to the very possibility of morality and of ethics, resulted in an entanglement of ethical inquiry with metaphysical speculation essentially irrelevant to it and thus retarded the progress of ethics as a possible science. Kant's treatment of morality is the most instructive example of the futilities to which vigorous ethical thought is condemned, so long as it follows the insidious bias of theological dogmatism and seeks the guarantee of freedom in a morality transcending the world of possible experience. That Kant, the practical task of whose epistemology was to free the mind of man from the dogmatism of his predecessors, was himself the child of the old order and manifestly unable to overcome its bias in the field of morals, is the less surprising when we consider that Schopenhauer himself, a professed completer of Kant's work and an arch-enemy of theological ethics, remained under the sway of that ethics in his wholesale adoption of Kant's doctrine of the empirical and the intelligible character and of some of the most confusing elements of Kant's notion of freedom involved in that doctrine.

With the realization of the true origin of dogmatic libertarianism in ethical theory, however, it becomes manifest that the conflict in ethical theory between freedom and determinism is but a stage, perhaps the last stage, in the effort of thought to realize itself as self-consistent and law-conforming, and it becomes apparent also that the issue between determinism and indeterminism is not, strictly speaking, a distinctively ethical issue. Moreover, the issue, as it is sharply conceived in ethics, is itself unreal, an anachronism in morals, where it has survived owing precisely to the fact that the too slowly relaxing pressure of theological dogmatism has kept ethics divorced from actual experience.

The fundamental metaphysical problem as to the admissibility of the absolutely spontaneous is not raised here at all.

If it can still be regarded as a problem, it is certainly not a part of our present undertaking to attempt its solution. The only point to be kept in mind here is that it is a problem of metaphysics, the solution of which is not a *sine qua non* of scientific ethical inquiry. By this I do not mean to divorce ethics from metaphysics or from theory of knowledge, but I do mean to point out that the progress of ethical science, in this as in other respects, requires a more complete liberation from metaphysical as well as from theological dogmatism.

The genuine problem of freedom is essentially a problem affecting the ultimate description of the universe: Does it or does it not involve the absolutely spontaneous, the absolutely indeterminable? To the solution of this problem every science contributes, and the deterministic tenor of modern scientific thought is accordingly significant. Ethics, like every other science, must approach its material, human conduct, with a view to describing its actual character, with a view moreover to estimating that character in accordance with the criteria revealed in the process of description. And in such a process of concrete ethical thought, the notion of the absolutely spontaneous can enter, if at all, only in so far as it is relevant to moral valuation proper. That is to say, freedom can be entertained as a possible ethical postulate or category only in so far as it is necessitated by characteristically ethical notions, such as responsibility, praise and blame, or moral valuation in general. An ethical theory which passes beyond this point in its dealings with the problem of freedom is an ethical theory which forces itself into a metaphysical issue and by so doing frustrates the successful prosecution of its own task. As ethical science realizes the extent to which the problem of freedom is relevant to its own specific inquiry, it realizes the necessity of analyzing anew and more carefully the significance of the notions of responsibility, praise and blame, and the implications of conduct-evaluation. It then appears with increasing clearness that approval and condemnation are not limited to the field of morals, but apply intelligibly in fields which the most ardent



libertarian would describe in deterministic terms. It would be dogmatic, to be sure, to maintain that the analysis of responsibility and of moral valuation generally will lead to the ethical confirmation of a deterministic metaphysics. But it is significant that the scientific tendency in recent ethics is one of comparative indifference towards the traditional libertarian controversy. This tendency on the part of contemporary ethical science indicates its determination to approach its own distinctive problems unimpeded by dogmatic prepossessions and, by a distinctively ethical analysis of the experience with which it deals, to make its own real contribution to the metaphysical solution of the knotty problem of freedom.

## MILL AND COMTE

NANN CLARK BARR

THE relation of Mill to Comte is of special significance in the attempt to define Mill's place among the various currents of contemporary thought for two reasons: First, for the obvious reason that Mill himself refers to Comte as one who has exercised profound influence over his mind; but secondly, on evidence of a more internal character, because the two men represent two widely divergent reactions on the intellectualism and individualism which characterize eighteenth century thought, and because, from fundamentally the same theory of the nature of knowledge in relation to the world of experience and to ultimate reality, they arrive at opposite solutions of the more concretely complex problems of man's practical relations, moral and social, to the human world. As Mill puts it in his *Autobiography*, they agree as logicians but not as sociologists.

The influence of Comte stands in the sharpest possible contrast to the influence of Bentham on Mill's general mental attitude. Although it is impossible to trace a single line of development in Mill's thought, which contained conflicting and unassimilated tendencies to the end, it is perhaps the point of crisis in his mental career when he first superimposed on the analytic, egoistic, atomic, discontinuous method of Bentham, the socialistic, synthetic, and historical vision of Comte and, in lesser degree, of Coleridge, as representatives of a new tendency in philosophy. The essays on Bentham and Coleridge, which manifest so strong a sympathy with what Mill himself considered the spirit of the nineteenth as opposed to the eighteenth century, appeared in 1838 and 1840 respectively, after the publication of the first two volumes of Comte's *Positive Philosophy* in 1837. Though Coleridge is taken as the type of the new

movement, he represents an attitude rather than a system, and it is to Comte that we must look for specific influence over important elements of Mill's doctrine.

When in a letter to Comte written in 1841 Mill announces his withdrawal from his adherence to Bentham, "in which I was brought up and in which I might almost say I was born," he overestimates the extent of the rejection. The rift which he even then recognized in the lute of his new discipleship was not closed, as he confidently hoped, by thorough discussion, but became wider when the subject was not scientific methods in general, but the nature and extent of the union and subordination of individuals in and to the whole of society. But if the individualism of Bentham may be traced in that hatred of "spiritual despotism" which leads Mill to say of Comte's work that "the book stands as a monumental warning to thinkers on sociology and politics, of what happens when once men lose sight in their speculations of the value of liberty and individuality,"<sup>1</sup> still it is Bentham with a difference. The reduction to self-interest of all the motives which guide men in society and in moral conduct is modified by Comte's sense of the inadequacy of *laissez faire* to express the solidarity of the social order and his emphasis on the social feelings in the moral life.

In their ideas of the fundamental basis of all knowledge, Comte and Mill stand on common ground. *Knowledge*  
~~We have no~~ knowledge of anything but phenomena. To attempt to transcend appearance, either by searching for an underlying substance of reality or by seeking a genuine cause outside the series, which produced it, is fruitless. We can study the 'how,' but not the 'why' of the world; we can observe constant relations between facts, which we formulate as laws of resemblance and sequence; these generalizations of the way things work are the utmost we can attain within the limits of scientific procedure. This, then, is the pre-supposition from which both Mill and Comte set out.

Since the goal of knowledge cannot be ultimate truth, but only provisional, working truth, the object cannot be to seek

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography*, p. 212.



that which we can never hope to reach; it must have its value within the realm of phenomenal experience. The aim is practical. Comte's formula, *savoir pour prévoir*, expresses on the intellectual side what the utilitarian criticism of moral acts by their consequences expresses on the ethical side. This dealing with knowledge as instrumental to conduct is characteristic of Mill's whole attitude; the study of the past is valuable for the sake of the lessons of guidance which it furnishes; moral judgment depends on the way in which an act takes effect in the world. In this practical anti-intellectualism, the subordination of knowledge to our action and reaction on environment, Mill can go the whole way with Comte. But this view is not at variance with the intellectualism which places the speculative intellect at the head as the main agent in the progress of mankind, as the instrument of co-operation which by its method and standard unites conflicting passions. "The history of opinions and of the speculative faculty has always been the leading element in the history of mankind." <sup>1</sup>

If the theory that the main determining cause of social progress is intellectual activity, so that the state of knowledge and the prevalent beliefs give the clew to the general character of an age or a people, is one-sided and lays too exclusive an emphasis on ideas, this is by way of counteracting that subordination of the intellect to the heart which led Comte, with his fantastic fetich-mythology, to seem to say, "Believe what you know to be untrue, for the sake of the emotional stimulus." If Mill over-emphasized reason, it was that it might be given due importance again after the over-emphasis of instinct in morality by Carlyle and the intuitionists generally, and of feeling in science by Comte in his later writings. "It is one of the characteristic prejudices of the reaction of the nineteenth century against the eighteenth to accord to the unreasoning elements in human nature the infallibility which the eighteenth century is supposed to have ascribed to the reasoning element. For the apotheosis of reason we have substituted that of instinct." <sup>2</sup> Salvation,

<sup>1</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 102.    <sup>2</sup> *The Subjection of Women*, p. 6.

according to Mill, lies in the intellectualization of feeling and instinct; that is, in the study of psychology, which will reveal the true structure of "what is bowed down to as the intention of nature and the ordinance of God."

But this dependence on psychology and hence on introspection Comte refuses to countenance. His phenomenalism is not built on the belief that the mind can know only its own states; on the contrary, it is just these which it cannot know. Psychology is so often the court of appeal for Mill because it is the key to the inner progress of character in relation to circumstances, while for Comte it is only the morphology and physiology of the brain. Comte's rejection of the method of introspection in psychology strikes at the root of Mill's reduction of logic and the theory of knowledge to psychological terms, which is a fundamental tenet of his philosophical faith.

In rejecting also any science of method in general, that is, any canon of proof which is universally applicable, Comte, in Mill's eyes, makes the mistake of treating the philosophy of science as consisting only of the methods of investigation. This is the carrying out of his tendency to begin with the concrete and particular which is his characteristic method of treating the science of society. But this is not enough. "We are taught the right way of searching for results," says Mill, "but when a result has been reached, how shall we know that it is proved?" This test of proof is the function of logic. Method, according to Comte, must be marked out for each science separately; there is no method apart from its specific operations, no logic except in its application.

Not only does Mill oppose Comte's subjugation of reason to feeling, but, while accepting the doctrine that usefulness is the sole aim of knowledge as fundamentally true, he does not thereby, like Comte, ban all research which has not an immediate practical bearing. "No respect is due to any employment of the intellect which does not tend to the good of mankind."<sup>1</sup> Thus far there is agreement. But Mill does not demand that truth shall have proved its usefulness before

<sup>1</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 172.

it is accepted; rather he has faith that the truth, however remote it may seem from life, belongs to a continuous reality which reaches down to human concerns. Therefore knowledge may be sought for its own immediate sake; the world will some time find use for it; it will not forever remain isolated but will take its place in the scheme of things. Unexpected applications of pure science teach us that, while some truths are of more certain and present utility than others, nobody can predict what may be useful: "Who can affirm positively of any speculations, guided by right scientific methods, on subjects really accessible to the human faculties, that they are incapable of being put to use?"<sup>1</sup>

But however arbitrarily Comte may define the limits of the exercise of the cognitive function, he is yet, in Mill's opinion, the greatest living authority on scientific methods in general. Though we cannot arrive at non-phenomenal causes of the phenomenal world, causality in another sense is universally present and is the basis of all our scientific judgments. The cause which we seek in order that we may control the effect or adapt ourselves to it is a link in a chain of sequences. This conception of causality as the observed succession of invariable antecedents is common meeting ground for Comte and Bentham and James Mill, though all three err in failing to distinguish between merely invariable and unconditional invariable sequences. So conceived, the reign of law is universal: "All phenomena without exception are governed by invariable laws with which no volition, either natural or supernatural, interferes."<sup>2</sup> Man takes his place in the natural world as the object of inductive study and in the terms of this naturalistic view a social science correlative with the other natural sciences is possible. For social phenomena conform to the same invariable conditions as physical phenomena and can be reduced to as firmly co-ordinated and coherent a body of doctrine: "The method proper to the science of society must be, in substance, the same as in all other sciences."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 173. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.



In this statement of the problem Mill concurs. And he regards as mere difference in order of procedure what at first looks like a more formidable disagreement. For Mill holds that "social science must be deduced from the general laws of human nature, using the facts of history merely for a verification."<sup>1</sup> As social causes "cannot have been known by specific experience, they must have been learnt by deduction from the principles of human nature. . . . Nor, in fact, will the experimental argument amount to anything except in verification of a conclusion drawn from those general laws."<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, as expounded by Mill, Comte's view is, that "as society proceeds in its development, its phenomena are determined more and more, not by the simple tendencies of universal human nature, but by the accumulated influence of past generations over the present. The human beings themselves, on the laws of whose nature the facts of history depend, are not abstract or universal, but historical human beings, already shaped, and made what they are, by human society."<sup>3</sup>

But these two modes of approach to social science, the psychological and the historical, the deductive and the observational, are not contradictory, but are complementary elements in one whole. Reasoning without verification by facts, or collections of facts without reference to law, are alike worthless. A right scientific method recognizes that either element implies the other; the order in which they are to be taken, whether the verification be experience or reasoning, whether the conclusion be logically deduced or provisionally derived from experience, makes no essential difference so long as their relations are kept clear, but depends on the degree of complexity in the particular subject studied. There can be a direct deduction of tendencies, if not of facts, so that social science need not in all cases be looked upon, as by Comte, as "essentially consisting of generalizations from

<sup>1</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> *Logic*, Bk. VI, Ch. VII, § 5; 8th edition, p. 613.

<sup>3</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 84.

history, verified, not originally suggested, by deductions from the laws of human nature.”<sup>1</sup>

When we pass from metaphysical and methodological considerations to the problems of human life in their application to individual and social conduct, Comte represents a reaction against the views which Mill developed; he revolts against the past of which Mill is the fulfillment. Comte denounces Rousseau for finding reality only in the individual, idealizing the natural man in isolation from society, and goes to the opposite extreme in the declaration that “the true human point of view is not individual but social. . . . Man is a mere abstraction, and there is nothing real but humanity;”<sup>2</sup> whereas Mill, though he corrects Bentham’s over-emphasis of self-interest, which unwarrantably restricts man’s impulses solely to those referring to self, by admitting the elementary and inescapable character of social relations, yet he does this by way of the needed supplementation of a half-truth instead of by a complete rejection of it, and still lays stronger emphasis on the individual than on society as an entity. It is equally true that the individual cannot exist as an individual apart from society, by which he is defined, and that society is real only by means of its component individuals. Comte denied this last in his conception of humanity as a being in a sense external to individual men, real in a meaning deeper than their reality.

But Mill does not go all the way to the counter extreme. While primarily insisting on the relations of individuals in partial independence of each other, he does not ignore that aspect of the truth which lays stress on the incompleteness of that independence. He accepts, albeit with qualifications, the organic view of society set forth by Comte. According to this view the race is a single, evolving unity of self-development, of which individuals are members or organs, having no function apart from the furtherance of the race. Temporally this race-life is one, a continuous, unified process,

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, Bk. VI, Ch. IX, § 1; 8th edition, p. 621.

<sup>2</sup> Auguste Comte, *Philosophie positive*, Vol. VI, p. 692; tr. by Harriet Martineau, Vol. II, p. 508.

because the present is inseparable from the past, is modified by all the cumulative reactions which have preceded it, so that "the living are always more and more dominated by the dead."

Since progress is thus regarded, not as a web, but as a single thread whose strands cannot be separated, every attempt to treat certain relations to the exclusion of others involves an abstraction from which we must return to that unity of reality in which all influences modify and interpenetrate each other, if we are to know the truth. Now while Mill is ready to acknowledge the interaction of the various phases of the social order, he is awake to the practical difficulties of a procedure which demands that we attend to everything at once. Mill contends that the separation of the departments of social inquiry is not a matter of wilful abstraction from what may be studied as a single whole. For progress is not unilinear. Certain aspects develop at a more rapid rate than others, and moreover the interdependence is not perfect but is more intimate between some parts than others. Different species of fact depend on different kinds of causes and therefore must be studied by themselves as "distinct and separate, though not independent, branches or departments of sociological speculation."<sup>1</sup> Conditions may be further isolated even in a given special department, by treating as constant those which change most slowly and considering the law of variations with reference only to those selected conditions which remain. This modification of the organic view of society substitutes for Comte's unbifurcating broad highway a pluralistic conception of paths which meet and interlace and separate again on the plain of social reality.

Mill is therefore prepared to consider the relations of the parts to one another, rather than to regard the parts as altogether subservient to the simple and perfect whole, when the question is one of the authority of society over the freedom of individual development, as well as when it is one of right to existence of sciences which apply to only partial

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, Bk. VI, Ch. IX, § 3; 8th edition, p. 623.



aspects of social life. This opposition in their views of the connection between whole and part, humanity and men, is represented by Mill's passionate protest against, and Comte's allegiance to, the unlimited power of the government, the practical authority of men over women, and the restriction of intellectual freedom in investigation and speech; that is, in the formation and expression of opinion, and of practical freedom in putting those opinions into effect. In all these points it is the total static outcome which Comte holds of value, not the highest possible attainment through effort, by which the largest number of individuals is progressively realized. For him the independence of thought and action is not essential to healthy growth, but a mere destructive and negative revolt against the supreme authority which holds the keys of truth and morality.

This authority, so far as conduct is concerned, is centralized by Comte entirely in the government. Social reform cannot aim at general reconstruction; it can do no more than restore the spirit of willing subordination on the part of the masses to leaders inspired by the sense of social duty. The working of the system may need reformation, but not the structure of the system itself. Democracy means no more to him than the rule of the superior by the inferior. How can the inferiors, the common people, be capable of distinguishing as rulers, their superiors? Ultimate power is in such a case vested in the hands of those least fitted to wield it; the weak are made judges of the strong. The mode of selecting officials, according to Comte's scheme, should be appointment by their predecessors in office, subject to the approval, not of their inferiors, the common people, but of their official superiors. Moreover, the idea of equality is only another obstacle to efficiency. If society is an organism, it can run smoothly only if different organs have different functions. This may be true, but it makes a great deal of difference whether, from a basis of initial equality as perfect as possible, that is, equality of the external conditions and equality of opportunity, individuals freely choose what organs they will be and what functions they will perform, or

whether certain disqualifications attend some of them from the beginning.

Mill's positive position on the limitation of the power of government over the individual, his insistence on natural equality of ability and the essential justice of the *laissez faire* doctrine, has been considered. His difference from Comte in these respects is founded on a difference as to the whole end in view, the entire justification of life. "It is not the uncontrolled ascendancy of popular power but of any power, which is formidable."<sup>1</sup> The object is not accomplishment of a definite purpose by humanity at large, the maintenance of a state devoid of friction, in which the inferior are always obedient to the superior, but devoid of initiative. The ideal is rather a voluntary union of freely active individuals. A given result may be reached by circuitous routes, by doubling back and blind straying from the path, by mistakes innumerable; but they are the errors of men who do not follow in darkness the light of leaders with whose direction and destination they have no concern, but of men each one of whom bears a light of his own, be it but a glimmering rushlight, and knows where his feet will fall, be it for only a few steps in advance. External perfection may be attained more quickly by the 'benevolent tyrant,' but it will not be so well worth attaining. If society progresses at the expense of the individual, it will be "dead perfection, no more," devoid of the spirit of adventure, of the lure of untried possibilities, the glory of dangerous mistakes, the responsibility which the lowest member of it may share and, by so sharing, take a conscious and creative, not a merely mechanical, part in the life of the world.

In the position which he gave to women, Mill discerned in Comte an instance of a class of human beings isolated *ab initio* from the activities of the community, a class differentiated for the performance of certain functions and debarred from others, regardless of individual capacities. Comte's attitude towards women underwent a radical change, which, however, did not affect the point at issue, their freedom as

<sup>1</sup> Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, p. 80.

individual human beings. He first regarded them as in all respects inferior and subordinate to men. Later his opinions were modified without, to Mill's mind, becoming more rational. "Instead of being treated as grown children, they were exalted as goddesses: honours, privileges and immunities were showered upon them, only not simple justice."<sup>1</sup> They were to take no part in public affairs, to be allowed no self-expression or economic independence by means of an occupation, but were to serve as the guardian angels of the men,—a mission for which by no means all women, by virtue merely of being women, are peculiarly fitted. Of Comte's two points of view, the first is probably the less galling. It has at least the advantage of straightforward sincerity. The second cages woman just as effectively away from her place as man's comrade in the world's activity, under the pretence of honoring her. The pedestal is not an acceptable substitute for room in which to work. Whether, when the obscurities of sex psychology are brought to light and clearly formulated, Mill's contention of equality of the sexes be justified or no, he at any rate follows the path which the modern movements are taking.

Mill opposes what he conceives to be the tyranny of the mass over the individual, which Comte upholds, whether it be in terms of class or of sex. The *laissez faire* principle holds even in the latter case, where special legislation has been most demanded. "Women are as capable as men . . . of managing their own concerns, and the only hindrance to their doing so arises from the injustice of their present social position."<sup>2</sup> A woman's right over her own person and property should not be interfered with by such legislation as that on factory labor, which ignores the fact that women in factories are the only women of the laboring classes who are not bound down by oppressive laws which make them slaves and drudges to their husbands. Even in the marriage contract, which Comte views as inviolable, no iron-bound law should compel people to follow a course of conduct which may in

<sup>1</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> *Political Economy*, Bk. V, Ch. XI, § 9.



the concrete case be inexpedient or definitely harmful. Marriage is a contract which should be revocable. So only can voluntary co-operation, the free choice of the individual, supplant mechanical obedience to a decree imposed from without.

The principle of equality, which is bound up with that of *laissez faire*, leads Mill to consider difference in sex altogether irrelevant to the freedom to exercise political rights or to choose the occupations by which economic independence may be established. "All human beings have the same interest in good government; the welfare of all is alike affected by it, and they have equal need of a voice in it to secure their share of its benefits."<sup>1</sup> The main point is that of individual freedom. Society cannot decide for the individual woman, any more than for the individual man, what she is fit to attempt. The only thing to do is to try it out, by the abolition of all exclusions and disabilities which close any honest employment to anyone. If such a course entails a decrease in general efficiency until the slow process of natural adjustment has set things straight, the disadvantage is not equal to the deadening influence of an *a priori* decision in the appointment of tasks. "The same reasons which make it no longer necessary that the poor should depend on the rich, make it equally unnecessary that women should depend on men. . . . The ideas and institutions by which the accident of sex is made the groundwork of an inequality of legal rights and a forced dissimilarity of social functions, must ere long be recognized as the greatest hindrance to moral, social, and even intellectual improvement."<sup>2</sup>

These dissimilar views of the civic and political relation between authority and individual activity are further carried out in the realm of thought, both in theory and as exemplified in practice. For Comte the right of private judgment is a rebellious emancipation from spiritual authority. The whole course of education is to stifle questions and to accept everything on the unchallenged authority of the teachers. It is

<sup>1</sup> *Representative Government*, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Political Economy*, Bk. IV, Ch. VII, § 3.

again the emphasis on the result instead of the process; the aim is to hand on certain established facts, not to teach the student how to think for himself so that he may learn how to test the claimants for acceptance as truth. No proofs, therefore, need be given; for an over-anxiety for proof breaks down existing knowledge. Comte ignores the consideration that existing knowledge which can be broken down by the zeal for proof is not genuine knowledge at all. On the contrary, he condemns revolt against tradition as in itself bad. Thus the statement that the living are always more and more dominated by the dead is re-interpreted to mean that we should submit to the authority of the past, not doubt its judgment nor test by our own reason or discoveries the grounds of its opinions.

In this moral and intellectual authority whose judgments are to be unquestioned Mill sees one of those half-truths which constitute the worst error. It is indeed incontrovertible that most opinions are received on the authority of experts who have devoted time, labor, and exceptional ability to their working out. Such a division of labor is essential, since no man can be a compendium of universal knowledge, and it involves faith in the conclusions of men whose work cannot be examined in detail by the layman. But the danger lies in vesting this leadership with an authority other than the place which it wins by its own merit. An "organized body" whose edicts are above question "would involve nothing less than a spiritual despotism," worse even than a temporal despotism, as the force of an "irresistible public opinion" is more subtly penetrative than the force of government.<sup>1</sup> The people "should feel respect for superiority of intellect and knowledge, and defer much to the opinions on any subject of those whom they think well acquainted with it." But the allegiance is freely given, not demanded. "They will judge for themselves of the persons who are and are not entitled to it."<sup>2</sup>

This liberty in the formation of opinions carries with it

<sup>1</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *Political Economy*, Bk. IV, Ch. VII, § 2.

freedom of expression. No authorized body can be the infallible teacher who can say, This shalt thou think, and This shalt thou speak, and to doubt whom is heresy. "The notion . . . that a government should choose opinions for the people, and should not suffer any doctrines in politics, morals, law, or religion, but such as it approves, to be printed or publicly professed, may be said to be altogether abandoned as a general thesis. . . . The human mind, when prevented either by fear of the law or by fear of opinion from exercising its faculties freely on the most important subjects, acquires a general torpidity and imbecility, by which, when they reach a certain point, it is disqualified from making any considerable advances even in the common affairs of life, and which, when greater still, make it gradually lose even its previous attainments." <sup>1</sup> Here again the vital thing for Mill is not the acceptance of an externally complete and inviolable set of truths, but the realization of the powers of each mind affected by those truths.

Moreover, in his essay *On Liberty* he maintains that truth is not established by the suppression of controversy but is brought clearly to light only by the recognition of what may be said against it. Only so, and not by unchallenged reiteration can the meaning be constantly renewed and kept vivid in the minds of its supporters as in the minds of those who first had to fight for its acceptance. If the opinion in question is error mistaken for truth, its error can obviously be made plain only if freedom of attack be permitted. But for Comte there are no such contested points. He assumes that the class set apart as investigators will do nothing which needs to be revised or reversed by the discoveries of a succeeding generation.

As to the realization of thought in action, Comte again prefers a blind right course to an intelligent mistake. The entire responsibility for conduct devolves on the aristocratic caste set apart for the purpose. "Liberty and spontaneity on the part of individuals form no part of the scheme." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Political Economy*, Bk. V, Ch. X, § 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 123.



And with that liberty and spontaneity is taken away the freedom of choice which takes its chance of error and hews out the form of the moral character of a man. "Every particle of conduct, public or private, is to be open to the public eye, and to be kept, by the power of opinion, in the course which the spiritual corporation shall judge to be the most right." Against this Mill sets his doctrine that, "as a rule of conduct, to be enforced by moral sanctions, we think no more should be attempted than to prevent people from doing harm to others, or omitting to do such good as they have undertaken."<sup>1</sup> The difficulty of drawing the line, of measuring the extent of man's partial independence and his connection with the social whole, so that application can be made of the formula, "The individual is not accountable to society for his actions, in so far as these concern the interests of no person but himself," belongs to Mill's social theory as a whole. Since for him society is not the end in itself, but the condition for the development of individual character, the freedom to work out one's will in the external world, the carrying of freedom of thought to its natural outcome in life, must be preserved as far as possible to each individual.

The ideas on which these two conceptions of the relative value of freedom and obedience to authority are based reduce to a difference of ethical ideals and methods. Is the highest good the minimum of discord and friction with the maximum of efficiency in the general progress of humanity, or is it the development of the largest possible number of persons into autonomous personalities which include, but are not entirely absorbed by, the relation to others which binds them together into a society? As Comte endorses the first ideal, he maintains not merely that the line between self-regarding and other-regarding acts is hard to draw, but that there should, as nearly as possible, be no self-regarding acts at all. He is as one-sidedly social as Bentham is one-sidedly egoistic. Self-interest, so far from being the ultimate motive for all conduct, must, in his view,

<sup>1</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 145.

though originally strong, be conquered and superseded by an exclusive attention to the good of others as the only inducement on which we should allow ourselves to act. Altruism is not merely the most important moral motive but the only one. Personal satisfaction should be starved to the last degree in the endeavor not to love ourselves at all. Comte, says Mill, adapting Novalis's characterization of Spinoza, was a morality-intoxicated man.<sup>1</sup> Mill's own view is in a sense a synthesis of the two opposing ethical theories: the egoistic hedonism of Bentham and the equally one-sided altruism of Comte. He does, it is true, set the egoistic and altruistic impulses over against one another as conflicting, not as involving each other. My self-regarding and other-regarding acts can be tabulated,—a proceeding exceedingly difficult in practice. But he also maintains a relation between them other than that of mutual negation; he holds that a reasonable gratification of the egoistic feelings is favorable to the growth of benevolent affections. "The moralization of the personal enjoyments we deem to consist, not in reducing them to the smallest possible amount, but in cultivating the habitual wish to share them with others, and with all others, and scorning to desire anything for oneself which is incapable of being so shared."<sup>2</sup>

Comte's insistence that morality can include only one set of motives with which all others are in eternal conflict is an example of the passion for unity which results in an over-simplification and over-systematization of life and conduct. Mill has always an eye for the concrete complexities, the infinite variety in experience, which, in its joyous recognition of differences and refusal to throw them all into one pot and make them one by the crude process of melting, makes pluralism immediately appeal to our sense of the genuine intricacy of reality. Why, asks Mill, must man care for only one thing, not self *and* others? Why is it necessary that all human life should point to but one object, and be cultivated into a system of means to a single end? When thus thrown into relief against Comte's ex-

<sup>1</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141.

treme socialism and monism, Mill's individualism and pluralism do not take an extreme and abstract form, but appear as the effort to achieve a synthesis between the spirit of Bentham on the one hand and that of Comte on the other. The attempt to assimilate the best of the new into the development of the old may not always be perfectly successful, but the impression left is of one who came nearer to the truth of our social and moral experience than did either of the upholders of the opposing positions.



## THE INTELLECTUALISTIC VOLUNTARISM OF ALFRED FOUILLÉE

ALMA THORNE PENNEY

IN the philosophy of Alfred Fouillée the two main currents of nineteenth century thought are brought together to form a comprehensive whole. The synthetic character of his work remains the same from the earliest inception of the doctrine of *idée-force* to the posthumous *Esquisse d'une interprétation du monde*, which he was preparing for publication when he was overcome by his last illness in the summer of 1912. For more than forty years, during which time thirty-four books appeared from his prolific pen, Fouillée devoted himself to the consistent presentation of a system developed from the conception of intellect and will as fundamentally one. In his later works he called this philosophy an intellectualistic voluntarism. No better term could be used to describe it. It is not an eclecticism, such as the work of Victor Cousin, nor is it a dualism of Will and Idea, such as Schopenhauer's. It is a monistic system involving a synthesis of naturalism and idealism by means of psychical factors common to both. In this synthesis, the underlying principle of which is *idée-force*, causality is shown to be psychical and ideas are shown to be not only facts of consciousness but forces. Reality is will, but it is not merely will. It is impossible to speak of will as a thing apart. Will is indissolubly joined with intelligence, and it is in the 'conscious subject' that Fouillée finds the only original and sure manifestation of the Real, existing *in* itself and *for* itself. The essence of his whole philosophy is crowded into the phrase with which he eventually characterized this conception of reality: *la volonté de conscience*.

Voluntarism is no new philosophy in France. Founded

by Maine de Biran, who died in 1824, the voluntaristic school of thought has gathered to itself a long line of disciples, including writers of such widely differing opinions as Renouvier, Ravaisson, Boutroux, Bergson, Le Roy, and Wilbois. Fouillée is allied with none of these, save in regard to a few scattered details of doctrine, because Fouillée consistently emphasizes the oneness of mental life and refuses to erect a metaphysic upon a partial view of reality. Voluntarism by itself seems to him as one-sided as the old rationalism which it opposes. From Maine de Biran to Bergson, voluntarists have neglected the part played by the understanding. In the philosophy of Bergson this neglect is more than a mere omission. It is a militant anti-intellectualism. All of these thinkers, however, agree in regarding volitional activity as fundamental to reality and to a theory of knowledge. All of them lay more or less emphasis upon the psychological fact of the immediate consciousness of personal activity. The dynamic character of reality receives different names according to the divergent conceptions of these voluntarists. Maine de Biran calls it spiritualistic activism; Ravaisson calls it liberty; Boutroux pleads for contingency in the laws of nature; Fouillée conceives of it as *volonté de conscience*, a continuous *élan en avant*, a never ceasing *évolution novatrice*; Bergson, in strikingly similar language, describes reality as change, an *élan vital* accomplishing a perpetual *évolution créatrice*.

In all of these conceptions there is involved a rejection of mechanistic materialism. From the time of Descartes the French mind has delighted in the clearness and distinctness, the neat exactness, and the perfect rationality of mechanical science. The Cartesian dualism of mind and matter afforded a starting point for the materialistic movement of the eighteenth century. If Descartes could explain a dog by means of mechanical laws, why should not La Mettrie explain man in the same way? Why delve into the mysteries of soul, when the brain could be dissected to demonstrate the non-mysterious character of mind? Matter and motion being the ultimate explanation of everything, thought is best

employed in discovering the laws of a mechanical universe. In this field the metaphysical aspect of materialism was represented by Holbach's *Système de la nature*, but its greatest achievements were within the realm of exact science. In the discoveries of La Grange and La Place, the keenness of the French intellect is demonstrated. In the field of natural science men like Lavoisier, Berthollet, Pasteur, Ampère, Cuvier, and Lamarck were known as widely as the subjects they investigated. It was an age of empirical investigation. The orderly processes of scientific method appealed to the tidy mind of the French thinker. Small wonder that Comte found here the ideal for his Positivism. Nor is it to be wondered at that out of this empirical era there should grow a new philosophy, at once constructive and sceptical. Littré, Taine, and Renan are but three representatives of this school of thought, and its influence has been very far-reaching. One of its notable results has been an increased interest in psychological investigation, though Comte's Positivism vehemently denied the right of psychology to exist. From Taine's work, *De l'intelligence*, we may trace the beginnings of several lines of thought, some of which have resulted in a reaction against science itself, as a construction of the intellect. It is due to this supposed over-emphasis of intellectual elements in science and philosophy that voluntaristic philosophy has arisen to plead the cause of the volitional elements. Modern French thinkers and writers in every field show a widespread revolt against that "nightmare" conception of the universe which seeks the progress of science in "the gradual banishment from all regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity."<sup>1</sup>

Materialism, positivism, intellectualism, and voluntarism alike fail to satisfy the requirements of a complete philosophy. No amount of scientific method, and no amount of unscientific intuitionism, can save a doctrine from the charge of superficiality, if it is based upon a partial or one-sided view of reality. This sort of superficiality is not to be confused

<sup>1</sup> Huxley, *Collected Essays*, Vol. I, p. 159.



with the sort that results from inadequate language. Profound doctrines are quite able to be expressed in simple language; and we all know how much shallowness of thought may be concealed by the ponderous obscurity of an uncouth terminology. In the case of the French doctrines in question here, there is no obscurity. Their inadequacy is mainly due to their failure to take account of the whole of reality. To separate matter and mind for purposes of discussion is justifiable; to divide the mind up into compartments of intellect and feeling and will may be equally justifiable; but to build a world-view upon any one of these fragments is to construct a superficial and unsatisfactory metaphysic. It is axiomatic that the whole is greater than the part, and it follows that any attempt to promote a fragmentary conception of reality to the dignity of the whole is foredoomed to failure. It was this aspect of earlier French philosophy that Royce had in mind, when he compared it to "a relatively bare room, full of electric lights, that shine with brilliancy upon a few diagrams, which pretend to be a picture of the universe."<sup>1</sup> It is this aspect also that engages the attention of Fouillée and leads him to attempt a synthesis which shall be comprehensive enough to include the truth of all these divergent systems.

The synthetic character of Fouillée's philosophy was established in his doctoral thesis on *La liberté et le déterminisme* in 1872, but it reached its most definite expression in 1879, when he published in the *Revue philosophique* an article entitled, "La philosophie des idées-forces comme conciliation du naturalisme et de l'idéalisme." In this article he outlined for the first time that "méthode de conciliation" which he applied to all of his subsequent work, both historical and constructive. The chief feature of this method was the use of mean terms to reconcile differences between philosophical theories. The intercalation of such a series of mean terms reduces the opposition of contraries to an infinitesimal difference. Fouillée was indebted to Leibniz for the suggestion that differences may be so reduced as to be negligibly small.

<sup>1</sup> "Jean Marie Guyau," *Studies of Good and Evil*, p. 360.

Though such an intercalation of mean terms may not result in a complete identification of opposites, it does result in their progressive approximation toward unity. It succeeds in introducing harmony where there was discord, and convergence where there was divergence.

The first application of this method had appeared in *La liberté et la déterminisme*, in which Fouillée had advanced the theory that the idea of freedom serves as an intermediary between freedom and determinism. The force of the thought itself is such that it is bound to arouse a striving and to generate power. Scientific determinism then loses its hold on moral activity. Moral freedom becomes progressively more assured as we strive more and more to conceive our auto-determinism. In an unpublished fragment the idea of freedom is defined as "the self having consciousness of its own power in its tendency to break down all barriers and surmount all obstacles." It is the self at once conceiving and desiring its own independence. This idea of individual causality is the first stage of freedom; but the second stage, in which alone freedom is complete, is dominated by the idea of universal finality. The first stage posits the self; the second stage unites the self to the whole. The passage from one stage to the other is assured by the psychological origin of the consciousness of self-activity. There is always a non-self acting on the self, and the self is always reacting on the *milieu* which limits it. In this way there arises a recognition of the obstacle as another will, then a recognition of a plurality of wills. The subject thus objectifies itself and passes from the conception of another will to the conception of a universality of causes and effects. The will is a "perpetual *marche en avant*" or a perpetual induction. "It is possible for it to expand toward the universal because it is a force, and that expansive power is the very essence of force."<sup>1</sup>

The method here outlined was amplified greatly in the statement given it in 1879. The distinct steps to be taken were clearly described and the application of the method to

<sup>1</sup> *La liberté et le déterminisme*, p. 274.

the history of philosophy pointed out. As a matter of fact, Fouillée had already employed the method in his own *Histoire générale de la philosophie*, which appeared in 1875. In reconciling opposing philosophies the historian should construct as well as criticise. He should carry out principles to their consequences and realize the ideal of the doctrines he interprets. "It is better to complete than to refute." We cannot complete a theory until we comprehend it, and to comprehend a philosopher we must place ourselves at his point of view rather than our own. The historian of philosophy must enter into the spirit of systems and interpret them as they aspire to be interpreted, by their great elements rather than by their imperfections. True appreciation is a complement of comprehension, and it consists in two main moments: the correction of errors and the reconciliation of truths. Incomplete theories are to be joined to each other only through their relation to the complete whole, the perfect unity, of which they are a partial expression. The completion of philosophical systems by means of absorption in others is, in Fouillée's opinion, of the greatest importance to their existence. Progress is achieved in thought much in the same way as in the evolution of the animal kingdom. A limit of development having been reached, deterioration follows, unless new blood be added by selection. So, too, philosophical systems must be renewed by other systems, in order to preserve their vital force. The method of reconciliation is one of progress from the good that is old to the good that is new. All that is merely eclecticism or syncretism disappears, till only the true synthesis remains.

From the foregoing brief statement of the early work of Fouillée it will appear that he was already far on the road of synthetic philosophizing when he first gave the name of *idée-force* to the principle which is the unifying element in his constructive synthesis of voluntarism and intellectualism. From 1879 till his death in 1912 his philosophy was known to the world as the "philosophie des idées-forces."

In order to understand what is connoted by these thought-forces it is necessary to know their genesis. Fouillée frankly



bases his doctrine on psychology. His point of departure is that of the 'thinking subject,' for whom reality is immanent in his own consciousness. Reality can be reached only through experience, and principally through psychological reflection. Consciousness is the condition of all experience. More than that, it is the primordial experience itself, the irreducible and ultimately real Being. Psychological reflection, then, is something more than the discovery and enumeration of successive states of consciousness. When we enter into ourselves to investigate the nature of this immanent reality, we do not leap into a void, but (the phrase suggests Bergson) we "plunge into the real." Psychology must be taken as the basis of general philosophy because it is the study of the indissoluble union of thought and will. To know what Being is, we have only to ask ourselves with what fundamental characteristics it is felt, known, and willed. This seems to Fouillée not only the most direct method of approaching the essential problems of metaphysics, but the only one which does not exclude in advance every intelligible solution. We cannot put ourselves outside of the universal reality, for then it would no longer be universal. The metaphysician must not regard thought as a necessary evil, a limitation of his power to engulf himself in the real, but rather as an indispensable element in the solution of his problem. He cannot amputate the real world from his thought about it. If he could, his success would result in a sort of intellectual suicide, for the world thus obtained would no longer be the world which metaphysics seeks to represent to itself. It would no longer be the whole. Therein lies the source of the falsity which Fouillée ascribes to the systems of exclusive materialism and exclusive idealism, and likewise to exclusive intellectualism and exclusive voluntarism.

In the construction of a monism based on consciousness as the fundamental type of existence, Fouillée endeavors to prove that force is an element in all facts of consciousness. He uses 'force' in a sense larger than that conveyed by mechanics. From the point of view of mechanical science,

there are only movements and mathematical formulas expressing the succession of these movements. There are no forces. Force, activity, efficient causality, all these are terms that are excluded from mechanics as much as from logic. An explanation of psychological facts which is guided by the principle *omnia mecanice fiunt* is only partially true. Where we deal with physical or physiological facts, such as cerebral activity, we remain in the realm of mechanism. But facts of consciousness may not be thus dismissed. There must be a mean term between the mechanical action of the *milieu* upon consciousness and the representational character of so-called 'pure' intellection. Such a mean term is found in the appetitive process, at once mental and mechanical, since it consists of the three moments, sensation, emotion, and motor reaction. It contains all the necessary elements for the explanation of both automatic, mechanical movements and simple, voluntary movements. Movement, force, activity, or whatever it be called, is thus restored to a mental basis. The psychical and the mechanical are not two aspects. They are one single reality which is revealed to itself in appetite by direct and immediate revelation. Conscious activity is psychical. It is the appetitive and perceptive nature of consciousness which renders it capable of producing changes. Whether its activity shall evolve toward mechanical action, on one hand, or toward willed action, on the other, is simply a question of the diminution or increase of consciousness. Its relation to the brain is one of collaboration, not of parallelism.

It is mainly in his *Psychologie des idées-forces* (1893), a two-volume work of great importance in the realm of voluntaristic psychology, that Fouillée expounds the theory of the appetitive process which is fundamental to his principle of thought-forces. There are also a number of valuable statements of the doctrine in other works, notably in his *Évolutionisme des idées-forces* (1890), the Introduction to which furnishes a succinct summary of his synthetic philosophy, and in *La morale des idées-forces* (1908), which develops its ethical aspect.

The appetitive process, in brief, is a process of external action and internal reaction. Even in the most rudimentary consciousness, according to Fouillée, there appear three terms: (1) Some sort of discernment, whereby a being perceives his changes of state; (2) some sort of well-being or ill-being, wherein he is not indifferent to the changes; (3) some sort of reaction, which is the germ of choice or preference. As soon as the process reaches the stage of reflection upon itself, it constitutes the 'idea,' which Fouillée takes in the Cartesian and Spinozistic sense, he says, "as a discernment inseparable from a preference."<sup>1</sup> From discernment there is born intelligence; and from preference, will. The idea is thus an internal revelation of an energy and of its point of application.

The appetitive process is thus seen to determine the character of the intellectual element in consciousness. 'Pure' intellection is an abstraction. Every conscious state is an 'idea' in so far as it is apprehension; but it is also a 'force,' because it involves a preference, or a form of willing. No 'idea' can be a mere static representation of an object, a picture projected from an external world into the *camera obscura* of the mind. If ideas could be so acquired, they would be the resultants of the action of the object upon the *brain* of the subject, which would be a biological, not a psychological, phenomenon. Taking the word 'idea' in a larger sense than that connoted by its representative aspect alone, Fouillée is able to emphasize the oneness of the mental life to a degree which is impossible for any philosopher who would erect into an absolute a single element of the threefold process rooted in appetition.

The same mutual implication of these three elements is shown in Fouillée's discovery of the "foundation of existence" in the principle, *volonté de conscience*, which is the phrase most used in his later works to designate his synthesis of voluntarism and intellectualism. He chose the expression "volonté de" in conscious contrast with the various presentations of voluntarism which have followed Schopen-

<sup>1</sup> *Psychologie des idées-forces*, Vol. I, p. ix.



hauer's theory of the will. His opposition to these philosophies of the will is based on the same objection as his opposition to a 'pure' intellectualism, namely, that they erect into an absolute some one particular manifestation of will. The total activity of the will includes all such partial manifestations as the 'will for power,' the 'will for life,' and the will for practical 'activity.' Their relation to the 'will for consciousness' is that of part to whole.

The conscious subject wills to be *pour soi*. That is to say, he wills to be as conscious as possible. The maximum of consciousness involves the maximum of its elements, thought, feeling, and action. The intimate union of these three elements has been discovered in the appetitive process underlying the law of *idées-forces*. It is but a further development of the same theory of the will which appears here as "one will with three functions." The correspondence of the three functions, *intelligence*, *jouissance*, and *puissance*, to the former trinity indicates at once their psychological origin.

The first function, *intelligence*, is derived from the psychological relation of subject and object. The conscious subject is in perpetual relation with other subjects, whence arises a feeling of difference, a distinction between the 'self' and the 'non-self.' The genesis of this idea of self is explained by the formation of centers in consciousness which end by being called 'I,' 'you,' 'he,' 'it,' etc. "Consciousness spontaneously polarizes itself," says Fouillée, "and the two poles are the willed and the non-willed."<sup>1</sup> The idea of self, when once formed, becomes a center of gravitation, seeking to make other beings its means of action, feeling, and increase of consciousness. As intelligence grows, the modification of the subject's consciousness becomes another object, through the spontaneous judgment of discrimination. That is the dawn of reflection. Reflection inevitably turns inward upon the activity of the conscious subject, to discover within the functions of consciousness the dynamic character of reality. Intelligence implies

<sup>1</sup> *Psychologie des idées-forces*, Vol. II, p. 18.

the relation of consciousness and the world, and this relatedness is present from the beginning. Objectivity is inherent in subjectivity itself.<sup>1</sup> The problem is no longer the question, Does the subject exist? but, How does it act? The conscious self is never *solitaire* but always *solidaire*, because its functions of thinking, feeling, and acting all imply the ceaseless action and reaction of subject and object. Neither subject nor object can be comprehended by itself. To be intelligent at all is to be in relation, in action and reaction, with an object.

The second function of the will-for-consciousness, *la jouissance*, or sensibility, is almost equally significant for a synthesis of intellectualism and voluntarism, for it links the other two functions together in a manner that renders their union more intelligible. Briefly, the subject acts with an enjoyment both of his activity and of the idea that directs it. In fact, Fouillée goes even further than this and remarks that, "Without this immanent *jouissance*, he would not act at all."<sup>2</sup> Such a function is indispensable to ethical activity, and it is in the field of ethics that Fouillée develops its possibilities most fully. He does not arrive at hedonism in following out the relation of pleasure and activity, but maintains consistently that the act is done for its own sake. It is not done *for* pleasure but it is always done *with* pleasure. In *La morale des idées-forces* he shows us how moral activity is governed by a "persuasive ideal" instead of by an abstract imperative. We are drawn, not driven, toward morality. The more joy there is in moral behavior, the more moral it is, and the greater the *idée-force* of the ideal. But because this *jouissance* is rooted in the will-for-consciousness and is indissolubly connected with intelligence, we find that it is at once subjective and objective. The intelligence cannot comprehend without enjoying, nor enjoy without comprehending, its objects. We have here, then, an intellectual joy which carries with it its own impulsive power through its connection with the third function of consciousness, and which is at once an *idée-force* and an *idée-joie*. The subject-object rela-

<sup>1</sup> *La pensée*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *La morale des idées-forces*, p. 123.

tion involves either the acceptance or the rejection of obligation, but in this respect, too, Fouillée finds the will fundamentally in agreement with the intelligence. He finds obligation to be a persuasion of the will by the intellect, constituted by a spontaneous expansion of both intelligence and will. When the individual will expands toward the universal, as it constantly tends to do, there may arise a feeling of obligation which is clothed with the authority of an imperative, but it is not primarily an imperative. It is an *idée-force* derived from the content of the moral ideal, which excites in us an *idée-joie* simultaneously with the 'ought.' It is only when the expansion of the will is opposed by obstacles that the ideal cherished by the will becomes an *ought*. Left to its natural development, the will would need no 'must' to thrust obligation upon it. Obligation is secondary to the supreme persuasive, which operates not by virtue of necessity and constraint but by virtue of their progressive disappearance. In this conception of the free man as one whose will is at one with the will of the universe, Fouillée approaches the grandeur and simplicity of Spinoza's philosophy.

The third function, *la puissance*, is the tendency toward realization which was emphasized by Fouillée as early as 1872 in *La liberté et la déterminisme*. Taken here as a function of the will-for-consciousness, it signifies that *élan en avant* which has just been called the expansion of consciousness toward universality. In this spontaneous expansion we find the explanation of evolution itself. It is the struggle of the will-for-consciousness to be as greatly increased as possible, to expand toward infinity. There is no equilibrium in the mental world, no conservation of energy, because *être* must also be *plus-être*. Because of the conscious power which characterizes voluntary activity, individuals endowed with it tend to "persevere in their own being," as Spinoza expresses the same thought; and the universal will-for-consciousness tends to expand into that indefinite development which constitutes *l'évolution novatrice*. Evolution is always *en train de se faire*. It is in this that the essence of power consists.



Although the language of Fouillée suggests the philosophy of evolution developed later by Bergson, who dwells upon the creative force of the *élan vital*, there are fundamental differences in the two points of view. Both Fouillée and Bergson are ranked with the voluntarists, but Bergson's voluntarism seems to have descended from the spiritualistic activism of Maine de Biran and to have become imbued with the doctrines of spiritual liberty and radical contingency that dominate the theories of Ravaisson and Boutroux. Fouillée's voluntarism, on the other hand, departs from the line of direct descent and develops the tendency found in Taine's intellectualism. There is the same insistence upon coherence and the same synthesis of those psychological elements which are usually divorced from one another in anti-intellectualistic voluntarism. In Taine, as in Fouillée, the essential connection of motor elements and ideational elements in our mental life is strongly emphasized. In Bergson there is a basic division between these elements. At the very outset of their evolution, according to Bergson, thought and movement parted company. The original *élan* of consciousness developed in two directions, instinct and intellect. Instinct remained identified with the spontaneous activity of life; intellect merely looks upon life from the outside. Intellect, then, must ally itself with a mechanistic explanation of the universe. Intellect may make itself tools, or mechanical instruments for measuring and computing, but it can never enter into the heart of reality and know life as it is. It may formulate sciences but it can never comprehend anything save the inert and lifeless. It is identified with matter; and matter and life, or matter and mind, are found by Bergson to be a dualism. Dualism in any form seems to Fouillée to be artificial. He declines to accept as philosophy a view of life which cuts it in two, puts instinct and feeling on one side and intellect and idea on the other. He repudiates the bifurcation of the evolutionary *élan* by means of which Bergson opposes the psychical and the physical, the temporal and the spatial, the intuitive and the intelligible, the quick and the dead.

Fouillée gives a much more satisfactory account of intelligence and its evolution than Bergson; without employing dichotomies, he demonstrates the indissoluble union of thought and movement in their common source, appetite. His doctrine of will as the ultimate reality revealed to itself in consciousness involves a recognition of the psychical character of force, and consequently a recognition of the psychical element in natural forces. Idealism and naturalism may then be reconciled, for both will find a mean term in the psychological nature of reality. The functional unity of the mental and the physical in appetite makes it impossible to erect either into an absolute, and likewise renders a double flow of the life impulse absurd. "There are no more two evolutions in us than there are two or three distinct faculties."<sup>1</sup> The very term, 'life-impulse,' seems to Fouillée to be used in a vague and irrational manner by Bergson, to denote something which eludes the clear-cut expressions of a conceptual philosophy, because it is itself formless and inconceivable,—“a romantic name for unintelligibility.” That this formless impulse may be divined by intuition is true only in so far as intuition is at one with the intellect; for the intuitive sympathy which enters into reality and ‘lives it’ is helpless either to gain or to impart its priceless knowledge without the categories, which are but “abstracts of ourselves, generalized and universalized.” In Fouillée’s metaphysics the categories of the will-for-consciousness are not points of view but points of contact, or identities between the intelligible and the real.<sup>2</sup> All of them are necessary to intuitive knowledge, with the possible exception of causality. Causality is excepted by Fouillée because, as he ironically observes, “Intuition is like ecstasy in never raising the question, Why? That is what makes it so little philosophical.”

In Fouillée’s attitude toward intuitionism as an interpretation of the universe there is to be found a vigorous restatement of his abhorrence of one-sidedness in philosophy. It would not involve a long search to discover in his works

<sup>1</sup> *La pensée*, Preface, p. xi.

<sup>2</sup> *Esquisse d'une interprétation du monde*, p. 158.

passages in which he deplores the unilateral views of conceptual philosophy quite as earnestly as he here deplores the lack of concepts in Bergson's intuitionism. It is not inconsistency, however, that appears in this critical interpretation, to which he devotes nearly one hundred pages in *La pensée et les nouvelles écoles anti-intellectualistes*. Both concepts and intuitions are partial, unilateral views of the whole; but concepts prove to have a scientific and philosophical value which intuitions lack. It would be vain to urge that science is outside the realm of intuition and that intuition therefore need not concern itself with the applicability of its findings to science, for it is just in respect to scientific exploration that an enlightened intuition is most brilliantly exhibited. It is because the kind of intuitions which Bergson describes are not enlightened that they are useless for philosophy as well as for science. When intuitions confine themselves to obscure feelings, affections, emotions, and vague divinations, they may have a psychophysiological value, but they have no value for philosophy until controlled and interpreted by reason. They must be universalized or they remain mere sudden and spontaneous revelations of that which is transitory: intuitions without the *tueri* and without the *in*. To become useful for our interpretations of reality, they must enter into a synthesis with concepts and all other partial approaches to knowledge; they must become unified in consciousness and expressed in intelligence. Intuitionism rightly appeals to the most immediate possible consciousness, but it wrongly attributes to this immediate consciousness a mass of data which are really only ulterior concepts. Conceptual philosophy, on the other hand, rightly sees in ideas the formulas of relations appertaining to the real, but it wrongly wanders into abstractions. Both views are needed, in so far as both contain true elements, but neither must be regarded as sufficient in itself. Of the two methods, intuitionism seems the less able to serve philosophy, because it is fore-ordained to be mute, and the human mind can gather very little solace from an oracle that is dumb. Fouillée's own condemnation



is more sweeping than this, and even more so than Kant's famous epigram. He says that intuitions without concepts are not merely blind; they are non-existent.

Another phase of the divergence in the evolutionary doctrines of these two noted voluntarists is disclosed in their radically different theories of the relation of instinct and intelligence. Fouillée's account is the earlier and more satisfactory. Both instinct and intelligence have their basis in appetite, which has been shown to form the intermediate stage between reflective thought and brute mechanism. Having the same origin, instinct is not different in kind, but in degree of consciousness, from intellect. In the beginning of conscious life motor reaction is inseparable from the conscious excitation. Habit and heredity tend to organize the mechanical structure of an animal in such a way that consciousness and appetite are less and less needed to instigate or direct each repetition of the act. Since natural selection will eliminate whatever is not useful, the utility of an act need not be represented beforehand. The inevitable accompaniment of pleasure or pain serves to impel reaction quite as readily as would an intellectual representation of an end to be served. The directive idea is virtually preformed in the structure of an organism, and it becomes actual under the influence of sensations, emotions, and appetitions. An instinct is neither a transformed mechanism nor a lapsed intelligence, but a transformed appetite. Intelligence itself is this same appetite, become more and more progressive and reflective, until it takes the form of a superior instinct, a superior adaptation to a larger *milieu*.<sup>1</sup> In his later statements of the same topic, Fouillée reiterates the fundamental likeness between all forms of conscious activity. Instinct and intuition are no nearer the heart of reality than is intelligence, nor are they any the less utilitarian. To say that the intellect falsifies the real, as Bergson does, is to misunderstand the nature of the real as well as the nature of the intellect.

It is a presupposition of modern philosophy that reality

<sup>1</sup> *Évolutionisme des idées-forces*, pp. 209-229.

is intelligible. Experience is possible for the knowing subject because the mind has points of contact with the object known. A psychological theory of reality such as Fouillée's is never in opposition to a logical interpretation of the nature of things, because subject and object are unable to sever their relation of functional unity. The intellection of the real is the highest effort of that will which is the foundation of our being. "Intelligence, immanent in the life of instinct, and not externally patched upon it, is unable not to pursue its exercise, which is knowledge; its object, which is reality; its law, which is truth; or its development, which is indefinite progress toward the real and the true."<sup>1</sup> Philosophy is thus the *idée-force* of reality itself.

<sup>1</sup> *La pensée*, p. 31.

## HEGELIANISM AND THE VEDANTA

EDGAR LENDERSON HINMAN

THE attempts of western philosophy to formulate a thorough-going system of idealistic monism have persistently suggested to many minds the substantial identity of such a mode of thought with the philosophical pantheism of India. To some thinkers the suggestion has been distinctly a congenial one, and it has been gladly fostered by such writers as Schopenhauer, Max Müller, and Paul Deussen. The representatives of the Hegelian tendency, however, have in general repelled this view. They are willing to strike hands with Spinoza, it is true, provided a certain rendering of Spinozism is pushed into the foreground; but the regular exponents of the Vedanta quite commonly draw their fire. Perhaps the Hindu scholars are less hesitant to admit kinship. Certain of them, at any rate, aim to commend Vedantism to western thought by urging its essential identity with the Absolute Idealism of the Hegelian school.

But whatever the representatives of western monistic idealism themselves may say, their critics and the educated public in general seem to feel that there is probably a great deal of truth in the charge that they are essentially pantheists of the orthodox Brahmanical type. The assertion is an old one, of course, but perhaps no other single contention has functioned more largely than this in the recent outburst of criticism against all forms of Absolute Idealism that have learned anything from Hegel. Pragmatist and Bergsonian writers, in particular, have made a large handling of it, and it is scattered at large throughout philosophical literature.

At the same time, a thoughtful reader is impressed that this charge, in the form commonly found in recent philosophical discussion, is quite loose and indefinite. It regularly



dispenses with all analysis and is too indiscriminating concerning the exact meaning of the doctrines which it is striving to identify. Indeed, the precise sense in which they may be identified is normally left vague.

The critic can hardly be understood to allege, of course, that the two philosophies are flatly one and the same. The enormous differences in point of historical setting, method, goal, internal development, and cultural results preclude such a suggestion. He must mean, then, that in spite of the obvious differences which separate two great historical systems of thought, there are similarities on certain issues which are of so great importance that in comparison with them other differences are dwarfed. The issue becomes, then, one of decision concerning dominating significance; and this needs to be much more accurately defined and argued than is usually done.

Further, the careful student is impressed that the writers who urge this identification uniformly omit to make an analysis of the meaning and interpretation of Vedantism and to discriminate the different schools in its development. And yet that is of the utmost importance to any fruitful discussion of this matter. There exist many different editings of the Vedanta. Two, in particular, have attained to marked prominence. The followers of Sankara present an abstract monism that is frankly and avowedly pantheistic, perhaps the only Simon-pure pantheism that the world has ever seen. The party of Ramanuga, on the other hand, present monism in quite a different light, a concrete monism, one may say, which would seem to be rather more theistic than pantheistic. Both are Vedanta; both rest upon a philosophical interpretation of the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Vedanta-sutras. Now a comparison with Hegelianism which holds good of one of these lines of development may not and often does not hold of the other at all.

Is Hegelianism like the Vedanta? That depends upon whose Vedanta one is talking about. If the Vedanta of Sankara is under discussion,—the pantheistic Vedanta, the world's arch representative of abstract monism,—then the

present writer is convinced that the two philosophies are essentially unlike, and are even opposed. But if the reference is to the Vedanta of Ramanuga,—the Vedanta of neo-Brahmanic reform, of Vishnuite theism rather than orthodox Brahmanic pantheism,—then it would seem that, in spite of obvious differences, the similarities are so genuine and significant that the two may be regarded as essentially similar in their philosophical import. I should like to develop this view, so far as somewhat narrow space limits make possible.

The factors which argue for the easy identification of Hegelianism with the orthodox presentation of Brahmanism may be hastily surveyed. They are: the strongly marked negative movement in each, whereby everything that is limited and finite is branded as unreal; the radical monism, whereby the Absolute alone is regarded as truly real; and especially, the doctrine of the Universal Self, according to which every finite mind is vitally one with the Infinite Spirit, and finds its 'truth' and its good in coming to the consciousness of that union. And when these things have been said, the case seems to many minds to be really closed.

But "when two men say the same thing, yet are they not the same." A discriminating study will show, I think, that each of these fundamental teachings bears a quite different significance in western monism from that intended by Sankara, and that the differences are really the matter of capital importance in the comparison. In order to bring out such differences, we may make a brief analysis of the two philosophies, especially in regard to (I) the method by which each is controlled, (II) the doctrine of appearance which results, and (III) the doctrine of the Absolute Self and its significance for the finite individual.

## I

The method which is prevailingly used in the Vedanta, and which comes to its climax in the speculation of Sankara, is that of a pure and unrelieved abstractionism which neglects or negates all differences. One could assemble from the

sacred literature pages on pages of passages which commend this method, passages which have become famous in Hindu discussion.

Thus, in the Khândogya-Upanishad, we read:

"My dear, as by one clod of clay all that is made of clay is known, the difference being only a name, arising from speech, but the truth being that all is clay;

"And as, my dear, by one nugget of gold all that is made of gold is known, the difference being only a name, arising from speech, but the truth being that all is gold;

"And as, my dear, by one pair of nail-scissors all that is made of iron is known, the difference being only a name, arising from speech, but the truth being that all is iron,—such, my dear, is that instruction."<sup>1</sup>

This, then, is the central account of the method "by which we hear what cannot be heard, by which we perceive what cannot be perceived, by which we know what cannot be known."<sup>2</sup> It is the quest of the universal, it is true, but of a universal defined in a purely negative way, by the simple process of throwing away all differences.

"Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the Infinite. Where one sees something else, hears something else, understands something else, that is the finite."

"Sir, in what does the Infinite rest?"

"In its own greatness—or not even in greatness."<sup>3</sup>

A passage in the Brihadâraṇyaka-Upanishad carries this method up to the non-duality standpoint of Sankara: "For when there is as it were duality, then one sees the other, one smells the other, one tastes the other, one salutes the other, one hears the other, one perceives the other, one touches the other, one knows the other; but when the Self only is all this, how should he see another, how should he smell another, how should he taste another, how should he salute another, how should he hear another, how should he touch another, how should he know another? How should

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. I, pp. 92f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.



he know Him by whom he knows all this? That Self is to be described by No, No!"<sup>1</sup>

It was on this basis, then, that Sankara founded his explanation of Vedanta as *advaita*,—non-duality,—radical, abstract monism. He must at once admit the authoritative-ness of a sacred literature which was somewhat popular in its thought, and therefore penetrated by complex and inconsistent motives, and also bring everything to a rational interpretation in terms of philosophical conceptions consistent with a high order of reflection. He dealt with the problem by grasping firmly the logic of abstraction as his controlling method, and purposed to accept rigorously the results in which it would issue. But the situation, which is really unworkable at the best, would have been obviously impossible, if he had not called to his service a distinction between two orders of philosophical knowledge. The higher order (*parâ vidyâ*) was supposed to afford the true Vedantic insight, the teaching of absolute non-duality. All elements of difference or distinction being then illusory, the Absolute stands as a blank, characterless unity. The lower order of knowledge (*aparâ vidyâ*), although still speculative, is the level at which the Upanishads normally move. Here the writers speak of the Universal Self, indeed, but ascribe to it thoughts and purposes, creative activity, and various characteristics and relations to man. Now all these modes of expression of the lower knowledge must, in the opinion of Sankara, be regarded as symbolical. In the philosophical sense they convey no truth whatever. They may be employed, however, so far as their use serves to suggest the true, undifferentiated Brahman. Sankara supports himself by such Upanishad passages as, "He is not this, not this," "Without parts, without action, restful, faultless, stainless," and many more. And yet after all, his real defence in making this distinction is in his clear consciousness of the necessary drift of an abstractionist logic.

"If you assert that Brahman must have manifold powers [the actual contention of Vishnuite theism], because, ac-

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XV, p. 185.

according to the scripture, it is the cause of the creation, subsistence, and extinction of the world, we say No! For the passages of scripture which deny difference to it can have no other sense [but the literal one]. But the passages about the creation and so on can likewise have no other sense? This is not so; for their aim is [only] to teach the identity [of the world with Brahman]. For when the scripture, by the examples of lumps of clay and the like, teaches that 'the Existent,' the Brahman, alone is true, but that [its] transformation [into the world] is untrue, it cannot have the aim of teaching a creation and the like. But why should the passages of scripture about the creation and the like be subordinated to those about the negation of differences, and not conversely the latter be subordinated to the former? To this we answer: *Because the passages of scripture about the negation of all differences have a meaning which leaves nothing more to be wished for.*"<sup>1</sup>

The method, then, is clear. A few passages in the sacred literature meet the demands of abstractionist logic to completeness; these therefore are 'higher knowledge' and are true. Most passages do not, and are therefore not to be taken as true at all, but as symbolical. The procedure of Sankara at this point is clearly a high-handed one. The man had not only the courage of his convictions, but also the convictions which were the logical outcome of his method.

And yet, as the method of abstraction is essentially an unsound one, its difficulties are promptly visited upon its devotee. Already in the Upanishads there is a passage which might have conveyed to Sankara a different suggestion from the one he seems to have taken from it. A pupil addressed to a master the request, "Tell me the Brahman." Then the master "became very silent." When the request was urgently reiterated, however, he replied, "I am telling Him to you, but you do not understand."

The sage of the Upanishads would seem to have been

<sup>1</sup> Sankara's *Commentary* as quoted by Deussen, *System of the Vedanta*, p. 110; see also *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 395.

the only really consistent representative of Vedantic pantheism that literature accredits to us. Any philosopher who attempts to expound the logical meaning of the doctrine which turns upon this method would have to "become very silent"—and *remain* so. A meaningless doctrine cannot be expounded. But Sankara did not follow the Upanishad example; his voluminous writings testify to that. Throughout the great extent of his expositions, however, he is moving in terms of the 'lower order of knowledge.' The situation which results is thus described by Professor Deussen: "But the great difficulty for the philosophical understanding of the Brahma-sutras lies in the fact, that neither in the text nor in the commentaries are the two conceptions clearly separated from each other, but rather meet us everywhere interwoven with each other, in such sort that the fundamental texture of the whole consists of a representation of the *exoteric*, or, as we may call it (with an extension of the conception, whose justification will be given in what follows) the *lower doctrine* (*aparâ vidyâ*), which, however, is penetrated in every province by the *esoteric* or higher doctrine (*parâ vidyâ*), standing in contradiction to it."<sup>1</sup>

The substantial soundness of the suggestion of Deussen is apparent to any critical reader of Sankara's great *Commentary*. This means, then, that the great volume of his expositions, to say nothing of the text of the Upanishads, does not aim to express the real teaching of Sankara's pantheism. That teaching is in fact inexpressible, and the symbolic language in which one hopes in some measure to suggest it does not put the real truth of the matter, not even in a partial degree.

Now of course the genuine esoteric teaching of Sankara, after one has thus cleared it from confusion with symbolical elements that are not meant to be taken seriously, is highly repugnant to the Hegelian thought. It is indeed the deification of the abstract category of Pure Being, destructively criticised by Hegel in the *Science of Logic* and by many other writers of the school. That the Hegelians do not

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 98.



*mean* to establish such an outcome will doubtless be admitted by all. But that their method implies it, and would really give it if carried out as remorselessly as with Sankara, seems still to be believed by many. Hegelian reflection also, it is urged, is driven by the 'negativity of the finite.' It is accustomed to set aside one stage of existence after another as 'mere appearance.' It moves towards an Absolute which is not only one, but is the negative of every particular type of thing which appears in our experience. Wherein then, it is asked, is the essential difference?

But in fact the method of the Hegelian philosophy is widely different in character and has a totally different philosophical significance from that of Sankara. Its conscious aim, as is well known, is to seek a reconciling synthesis between opposing factors. The contesting parties are not simply thrown away, then, as in the Vedantic scheme; rather, their vital and viable elements are conserved in the principle which is to synthesize them. And it results that the reconciling principle must always afford the affirmative basis for every characteristic which comes out in the finite factors to be interpreted. When the western idealist says that the negativity of thought has driven him to a higher synthetic principle, he means that the partisan views have not affirmed the nature of the real as profoundly or as adequately as the fuller reflective thought is forced to do. Such partisan views are inadequate and require to be negated; but the ground and significance of such negative movement is to be found in the rich and full positive nature of the real. Now this view would seem to have a much closer affinity with the Vishnuite doctrine of *sakti*, or manifold powers, than with its great opponent, the orthodox Brahmanical teaching of non-difference. But its more genuine relations, of course, are with the Platonic emphasis upon structural order, rather than with the Hindu deification of the formless; with the Aristotelian conception of the perfect ideal as the first principle that energizes all process; or even with Paul's conception, in *Colossians*, of the Son who is before all things and in whom were all things made.

To many writers it has seemed that such an estimate of the method of western Absolute Idealism has become antiquated since Mr. Bradley's negative dialectic has taken its well-known form. They believe that the cloven hoof of Brahmanism is thereby fully displayed. But this contention must be judged unsound, I think, for two main reasons. In the first place, Mr. Bradley's personal tendencies have led him to give a much more negative form to the discussion than the nature of the case demands; he is not a good interpreter of the conservative or positive element in the method. And in the second place, even those manifold explicit assertions of a positive truth in the order of finite experience which are contained within *Appearance and Reality* have been overlooked or denied to an amazing degree by his critics. Certain ineptitudes of the author's phraseology have reinforced certain other ineptitudes of his genuine thinking to produce a reaction that is out of all proportion to the merits of the issue. Mr. Bradley is not nearly so Brahmanistic as his pragmatist critics allege, but he seems to be somewhat more so than the idealistic method would properly warrant.

Hegelian idealism demands, according to its historic formula, the conception of the concrete or system-founding universal. Now one may indeed urge the criticism that such a conception is impossible, that all conception must involve a dash of abstraction. But this is another story. To determine whether such a contention is sound or not would take us too far afield. The point to be noticed is, however, that the ideal of a concrete universal, rich in content, has been deliberately placed before the western idealistic monist, and his method is adapted to establish that outcome. Before Sankara, on the other hand, stands the ideal of an abstract monism, a universal devoid of all systematic content, and his method makes any other outcome impossible. If the conception of a concrete universal be not in any sense possible, western idealistic monism may be a failure, indeed, but that is not saying that it teaches the same thing as orthodox Vedantism.

Now the unorthodox editing of the Vedanta message by Ramanuga and his followers is imbued with a spirit more congenial to western thought. It is still monism, to be sure, and therefore avails itself of the regular Sanskrit designation, non-duality (*advaita*). But the unity which it teaches is one that is modified or qualified by the inclusion of differentiations. This enables it to ascribe to finite things, and especially to the selves of men, a relative reality in the system which the universal establishes and maintains. The Hindus call this *visishta advaita*,—qualified monism, or concrete monism,—a monism admitting the presence of genuine differences within its unity.

The tendency of such a doctrine is towards a form of theism based upon the philosophical teaching of the immanence of God, to be sure, but avoiding the all-devouring consequences of consistent pantheism. It is by no accident, then, that the Ramanugists have been in general sympathetic with the philosophical ideas underlying the teaching of the neo-Brahmanical reforming sects. In their historical development as positive religions these sects have been characterized, of course, by many usages of a type common to all Hinduism and alien to us, but their philosophical theology is capable of a high development. The Vishnuite theology, in particular, while it has shown a remarkable power to become all things to all men, can be so unfolded as to present a very high and pure form of philosophical theism. It is this which has made the largest use of Ramanuga and which his followers have aimed to serve.

Professor Thibaut<sup>1</sup> has shown that Ramanuga's interpretation of Vedanta is as genuinely founded on the Upanishads and the Vedanta-sutras as is that of Sankara himself. It is unorthodox, to be sure, for two reasons, neither of which impugns its validity. In the first place, Sankara lived first, and his great authority had been established for perhaps four centuries when Ramanuga came upon the scene. As a consequence of Sankara's genius, the character of strict Brahmanism was already determined before Ramanuga taught,

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXXIV, Introduction.



and he could exercise influence only as an innovator. In the second place, the abstractionist logic is deeply imbedded in the Vedanta literature, is easily grasped, appears profound, and plays entirely into Sankara's hands. It is easy on that account to argue that Ramanuga was less than logical or thorough-going. And yet, in fact, it was Sankara who was most deeply inconsistent, for he availed himself constantly of the formulas of the lower knowledge, which on his view could have no real truth within them.

To illustrate the two interpretations and the appeal which each could make to the scriptures, we may take a brief passage from the Khândogya-Upanishad: "As the bees, my son, make honey by collecting the juices of distant trees, and reduce the juices into one form, and these juices have no discrimination, so that they might say, I am the juice of this tree or that, in the same manner, my son, all these creatures, when they have become merged in the True (either in deep sleep or death), know not that they are merged in the True."<sup>1</sup>

The direct purpose of the passage is to answer the question how it happens that those who are sleeping, and therefore merged in the All, do not know that they have obtained true Being. But the answer implies an ambiguity of interpretation familiar to students of Spinoza. How are Spinoza's attributes related to substance? Do they exhibit its essence truly, or are they simply appearances to the observer? Are the juices really in the honey, or has their distinction been totally lost in the unity? The first interpretation gives qualified monism, the second gives abstract monism, but each can appeal to the text.

It is by working along the first line that Ramanuga comes to the definition of Brahman as "the highest Person, who is essentially free from all imperfections, and possesses numberless classes of auspicious qualities of unsurpassable excellence."<sup>2</sup> In his *Commentary* he comes to a direct reckoning with the abstractionists. He first states their view with remarkable fairness. He assembles two pages of scriptural quotations in its support, which seem crushing. He ex-

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. I, p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XLVIII, p. 4.

pounds also the basis of its doctrine of nescience. He develops the philosophical arguments which lead that way. And then he turns upon it in the following smashing counter-attack: "This entire theory rests on a fictitious foundation of altogether hollow and vicious arguments incapable of being stated in definite logical alternatives, and devised by men who are destitute of those particular qualities which cause individuals to be chosen by the Supreme Person revealed in the Upanishads; whose intellects are darkened by the impression of beginningless evil; and who thus have no insight into the nature of words and sentences, into the real purport conveyed by them, and into the procedure of sound argumentation, with all its methods depending on perception and the other instruments of right knowledge. The theory therefore must needs be rejected by all those, who, through texts, perception, and the other means of knowledge—assisted by sound reasoning—have an insight into the true nature of things." <sup>1</sup>

He then proceeds to argue at large that perception involves distinction; that plurality, although not ultimate, is certainly not unreal; that there is no consciousness without an object; that all knowledge involves distinction and synthesis. In short, he develops the essential positions of a concrete monism when opposing an abstractionist method. He then attends to the exegesis of the scriptural texts which had been adduced in favor of Sankara. "We now turn to the numerous texts which, according to the view of our opponent, negative the existence of plurality. But what all these texts deny is only plurality in so far as contradicting that unity of the world which depends on its being in its entirety an effect of Brahman, and having Brahman for its inward ruling principle and its true Self. They do not, on the other hand, deny that plurality on Brahman's part which depends on its intention to become manifold." <sup>2</sup>

In Ramanuga's opinion, then, concrete, spiritualistic monism is the teaching of the scriptures, but by no means pantheism. He sets aside the high-handed assumption of

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLVIII, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

Sankara that all texts not pantheistic belong to the lower order of knowledge. In general, Ramanuga, like the Hegelians, finds a measure of truth in the categories and interpretations of ordinary life and reflection. To give these over, therefore, with Sankara, to utter illusion or empty symbolism is quite impossible.

We should notice that the issue is fought by Ramanuga on the basis of an appeal to sound logical method, to competent critical reflection, and to a fair interpretation of the sacred literature. This needs emphasis the more because the regular Brahmans throughout the centuries have fostered the opinion that Ramanuga was vastly inferior in point of thoroughness and logical consistency to their own great leader. When this opinion is reflected in the medium of a western scholar's mind, it tends to take shape in such a passage as the following: "It must be admitted therefore that in India, instead of one Vedanta-philosophy, we have really two, springing from the same root but extending its branches in two very different directions, that of Sankara being kept for unflinching reasoners who, supported by an unwavering faith in Monism, do not shrink from any of its consequences; another, that of Ramanuga, trying hard to reconcile their Monism with the demands of the human heart that required, and will always require, a personal god, as the last cause of all that is, and an eternal soul that yearns for an approach to or a reunion with that Being."<sup>1</sup>

But this view should no longer be allowed to pass current. The issue between the two types of Vedanta is both literary and philosophical. Dr. Thibaut has made clear that on the literary question Ramanuga is at least as well fortified in his interpretation of the scriptures as is Sankara; and even Max Müller, in other passages, accepts that estimate.<sup>2</sup> On the philosophical question the almost unanimous verdict of western thought, I believe, would ascribe the superior force and value to the method of Ramanuga. Personally I should make only this reservation: If it is stipulated that the Ve-

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller, *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 245, 247, and 249.



danta is to stand as an abstract pantheistic monism, then of course we ought to go the whole figure and hold with Sankara even to the extreme of his esoteric teaching. And some such stipulation really seems to be in the minds of those critics who think of the western Absolute Idealism as Brahmanical pantheism.

## II

The doctrine of appearance developed by the orthodox Vedanta is the well known teaching of Maya, the veil of systematic illusion. Appearance is manifold; Brahman is without differences. No part, phase, or aspect of the order of appearance, then, can present anything that even in a relative degree bodies forth the real. It is true that this account of appearance is contradictory. Maya can no more be united with an undifferentiated Brahman than the Parmenidean Way of Opinion could be reconciled with the Way of Truth. The present point, however, is that it is the only view that is even in any degree compatible with Sankara's Vedanta.

The interpretation of appearance given by the Hegelian form of idealism is of course entirely different from this. Hegel defends the power of human categories to seize truth, but regards such seizure as a matter of varying degrees, depending upon the adequacy of the categories employed. The doctrine of degrees of reality, professed by our absolute idealists throughout, is then the rejection in principle of the pantheistic Vedanta. If the categories of man's thought and experience grasp the real in varying degrees, and if some estimate may be formed concerning which are more adequate and which are less so, we are in a totally different world of thought from that of the orthodox Brahman. In fact, we are in the thought world of Aristotle rather than Sankara, of philosophical theism rather than of pantheism.

It is true that, in the view of western idealism, any ordinary or finite category is less than absolute. It always presents a matter which is an aspect of a larger whole and is real only as upborne by the larger whole. If, then, we

use Mr. Bradley's language, we shall soon be talking of such things,—everything,—as “mere appearance,” and not “reality.” Such a mode of speech may mislead even the very elect and it is almost certain to cause trouble for pragmatists. But it must be remembered that the doctrine of degrees of reality, which a careful reader will find deeply involved even in Mr. Bradley's text, is no clever device arranged to save the idealist from the charge of pantheism, but is rather of the very essence of both the Aristotelian and the Hegelian modes of thought.

Now on this conception of Maya Ramanugists, as is well known, oppose the followers of Sankara all along the line. Isvara, the Lord through whom the world is created, is illusion to Sankara; to Ramanuga this conception of the Godhead, as forming the ground of the order of experience, presents the “very God of very God.” Indeed, the material world itself, while its inner truth is a Universal Self, is regarded by Ramanuga as having a relative existence expressive of the genuine nature of things. He is fond of speaking of the material world, together with the souls of men, as forming the “body of Brahman.” The argument against the doctrine of Maya pervades Ramanuga's *Commentary*. Plurality and distinction from Brahman, he urges, although never amounting to absolute separation, must have an undeniable recognition in our world system.

A recent Hindu writer, after making explicit acknowledgment of his obligations to Ramanuga, sums up his own conclusions in a way that splendidly embodies the teaching of the ancient sage of the theistic Vedanta: “We are, therefore, compelled to admit the existence of a material or objective world distinct though inseparable from the world of spirit. We are compelled to recognize a world to which the conceptions of space and time, quality and quantity, substance and attribute, cause and effect, apply in contradistinction from the world of spirit, to which these conceptions do not apply. Here Absolute Monism, like that of the great Sankara, fails us. Its analysis of experience is halting and one-sided. It sees enough to detect the error of popular Dualism. It sees

that Nature is not independent of God, that it has only a relative and not an absolute existence. This relative existence it interprets as non-existence. Agreeing with popular thought in thinking that absolute existence is the only form of existence, it denies existence to Nature as soon as it finds out that it has no absolute existence. Again, sharing in the popular mistake that unity is opposed to difference,—not knowing that unity and difference are both implied in *relation*,—it denies that Nature is distinct from God, when it sees that it is one with him in the sense of being indissolubly related to him. There is, therefore, to it only one existence, unrelated to any other existence. The one absolute existence is above space, time, quality, quantity, cause and effect, without any relation to anything in space and time, anything admitting of quantity and quality, anything under the law of cause and effect. The latter order of existence is only appearance, the result of ignorance, and has no relation to knowledge properly so called. Such Monism does not see that the Absolute, the Spaceless, the Timeless, the Unchangeable, necessarily implies a world of space, time and change, and is inconceivable and unmeaning without the latter. Absolute Monism, therefore, such as denies the real existence of the world of time and space, has no place, we see, in the Theism that a correct analysis of knowledge reveals to us.”<sup>1</sup>

This author recognizes that the view which he is expounding as his own is identical with the Absolute Idealism of western philosophy; and indeed its thoroughly Hegelian spirit will be discerned at once by all students of these subjects. But it is Vedantism, used in the service of the teaching of the Brahma Somaj, in contradistinction to the orthodox Brahmanical doctrine.

### III

All Vedantism culminates, of course, in the doctrine of the Universal Self, as at once the inward life of all Being and

<sup>1</sup> Sítánáth Tattvabhúshan, *The Philosophy of Brahmaisim*, pp. 166f.



the true essence of every finite self. But the exact sweep and meaning of this doctrine, as consistently interpreted according to the viewpoint and method of the strictest sect of the Brahmans, is perhaps too little appreciated by western students. If that were clearly grasped, we might hear less of the charge that it is identical with the Hegelian conception on this point.

The difficulty with our western appreciation is that it is apt to be founded upon the Upanishad literature or other semi-popular expositions. But such accounts belong, at least prevailing, to what Sankara calls the lower order of knowledge. They are not really true at all. And I believe that our western student rarely contemplates the genuine esoteric teaching of Brahmanism.

We are apt to think that the finite self is regarded as a part of Brahman. Indeed, one of the Vedanta-sutras declares so in set terms. Sankara, however, deliberately inserts into the text at this point the Sanskrit word *iva*, "as it were," and then proceeds to explain that, since the Brahman has no parts, this cannot be regarded as strictly true. That is, it is a viewpoint belonging to the lower order of knowledge and is not really true at all.

The esoteric doctrine, then, declares that the finite self *is* the Universal Self, without restriction or qualification; "there is no difference." It is not a genuine concreting or specifying of the universal life to an individual point of view or center of personality; it simply is God in his fulness, and nothing more can be said. Sankara speaks, to be sure, of the individual soul as presenting the Universal Self subject to the limitation of the unreal *upâdhis* due to Maya. But since Maya is total illusion, and the *upâdhis* totally unreal, it follows that self and God are absolutely identical. There is no real discrimination or difference of viewpoint possible.

Western students often think of Brahmanism as teaching that the soul at the last will return to Brahman, "slip into the shining sea," and be merged and lost in the Infinite. Indeed, certain Upanishad passages so declare. But this

also is a mode of speech, a viewpoint of the lower knowledge. Sankara says: "Some maintain that the passages of scripture as to going [to the Brahman] refer to the higher [not to the lower, attribute-possessing Brahman]. This cannot be, because a going to the Brahman is impossible. For the all-present highest Brahman, inmost of all, who is the soul that is within all, of whom it is said: . . . 'Self only is this universe' . . . etc.,—to this Brahman whose character is determined by passages of scripture like these, there cannot now or ever be a going in. For we cannot go to a place where we already are; but on the contrary, according to common acceptation, only to another place."<sup>1</sup> The great maxim of Vedantism, "That art Thou," when interpreted in the orthodox manner, also carries with it the denial of any difference whatever.

Now this whole doctrine is, of course, fairly incomprehensible to the absolute idealist of the West. The point is not at all that the western scholar cannot fathom it; one may believe that we do as well in this respect as the Hindu. The point is rather that it is repugnant to the entire theory of thought and predication upon which western idealism rests. Identity without difference is a meaningless category, and all attempts to utter the esoteric Brahmanical teaching upon this subject are struck with an inevitable blight.

Hegelianism holds, as is well known, that the finite individual is real, not in his own right, but through the presence within him of the Absolute Self. This Universal Spirit, then, is the source and inspiration of knowledge, morals, religion, and the entire cultural and spiritual life of man. But here we are dealing with a concrete, system-founding universal, one which bears up within its life the essential ends of finite individuality. For such a view, even the naturalistic or temporal phases of the conscious life of the individual have a relative reality for the system, and the full meaning of the individual's life, the completed ideal of concreted personality, would of necessity be deeply embedded

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Deussen, *System of the Vedanta*, p. 109; see also *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 394.

in the nature of the real. To the Hegelian it seems absurd, it is true, to attempt to safeguard finite personality by making war upon the dominant sway of the Universal Spirit; but if the kind of Universal Spirit that is postulated is one that is interesting itself in finite individuals, a genuinely 'concrete universal,' it may be to each finite self "a rock, a fortress, and a might." So far as these phases of Hegelianism are developed, it would seem to point towards a theistic interpretation of the meaning of the world-system. At any rate, it affords to finite individuality, in the order of time, a vastly more affirmative status than orthodox Brahmanism gives; and even if we recognize that its suggestions of a timeless basis of personality are perhaps crossed by other motives, it still fortifies the essential ends of human endeavor in the cultural process as strict Brahmanism does not even attempt to do.

When we turn to the meditations of Ramanuga on this problem, however, we find ourselves again in an atmosphere more congenial to a western idealist. He first defends the plain natural meaning of the sutra which holds that the finite self is part of Brahman. This is at best, however, a very uninformative and inadequate conception, and Ramanuga does not stop there. For he observes: "To hold that the individual soul is a part of Brahman does not explain matters; for by a 'part' we understand that which constitutes part of the extension of something. If, then, the soul occupied part of the extension of Brahman, all its imperfections would belong to Brahman. Nor can the soul be a part of Brahman if we take 'part' to mean a *piece*; for Brahman does not admit of being divided into pieces, and moreover, the difficulties connected with the former interpretation would present themselves here also."<sup>1</sup>

If he still defends, then, the language of the sutra, that the soul is a part of Brahman, it is with the purpose of vindicating man's genuine membership in the organic system of reality. He next studies the relation of the finite to the

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLVIII, pp. 559f.



Infinite, with the result of establishing for the finite a very significant measure of being for itself. As Thibaut expresses the matter, "The individual soul of Ramanuga, on the other hand, is really an individual; it has indeed sprung from Brahman, and is never outside Brahman, but nevertheless it enjoys a separate personal existence and will remain a personality forever."<sup>1</sup>

The problem of human destiny can be touched only briefly. Here the orthodox doctrine can hardly be stated without accommodation to the language of the lower knowledge, but the teaching of Ramanuga is straightforward. Thibaut summarizes it as follows: "The release from the round of rebirth means, according to Sankara, the absolute merging of the individual soul in Brahman, due to the dismissal of the erroneous notion that the soul is distinct from Brahman; according to Ramanuga it only means the soul's passing from the troubles of earthly life into a kind of heaven or paradise where it will remain forever in undisturbed personal bliss."<sup>1</sup>

The philosophical idea that is involved in Ramanuga's view is based upon the logical motives that pervade his entire method and system of thought. It happened to engage, however, with the mythological conception of Vishnu's heaven, already developed among the teeming millions of the Vishnuite religion. Accordingly, the crude popular thought of that sectarian movement, partly theistic, as it was, and partly pantheistic, began to form itself under Ramanuga's influence. Partly because the pure philosophical influence could never largely dominate the mass, and partly, one may judge, because of certain inadequacies of his own thinking, the result has been equivocal in many ways. And yet, it is fair to say that since his time the intellectual forces in India which have attempted to resist pantheism while remaining true to the Vedanta have owed most of their power to him.

The charge that Hegelianism is Brahmanistic pantheism is usually made, we noticed, in a form quite loose and vague.

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXXIV, pp. xxxf.

We are now forced to conclude that in what seems to be its substantial meaning the contention must be entirely repudiated. If the critic really wishes to press the case, he should be required to present a thoroughly drawn bill of particulars.

## COHERENCE AS ORGANIZATION

G. WATTS CUNNINGHAM

FROM time to time within recent years the idealist has been challenged to show cause why his doctrine of truth as logical consistency should not be drummed out of camp as a wholly vacuous, useless, and even meaningless conception. "As a special favor," Professor Dewey pleads, "will not the objective idealist show how, in some one single instance, his immanent 'reason' makes any difference as respects the detection and elimination of error, or gives even the slightest assistance in discovering and validating the truly worthwhile?"<sup>1</sup> Dr. Schiller, less prone to compromise, unqualifiedly condemns the doctrine: "The doctrine that only the Whole can be true is seen to mean that humanly nothing can be true, and, indeed, to be ultimately meaningless, because it construes truth in such a way that it is no longer distinguishable from error."<sup>2</sup> Even within the house of its friends the coherence theory is not wholly free from suspicion. "Whether or not idealism will ultimately succeed in its task," Professor Bode believes, "the reconciliation and blending of the particular and the transcendental is at all events its peculiar and pressing obligation."<sup>3</sup> And he is apparently inclined to think that the task cannot be accomplished, is indeed a hopeless one, since the transcendental element, which "somehow holds over from one moment of experience to another" and which obviously is essential to the coherence theory, is frankly branded by him as a 'vicious abstraction.' Likewise, Professor Sabine in his thoroughly searching and very suggestive criticism of Bosanquet's *Logic* raises the following questions concerning the theory:

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XV, 1906, p. 474.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1910-1911, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XIX, 1910, p. 608; see also pp. 601, 604.



"If truth is the whole, and if totality is the ultimate principle of individuality and value, and if thought is just the nîsus of experience toward its completeness, what is this more perfect experience to which judgment is not the key? Is it altogether perverse to suspect that the defect is not in the relational form of judgment but in the coherence theory of truth? Is it not really more probable that the concrete universal is an inadequate logical principle?"<sup>1</sup>

Such criticisms as these strike at a very vital spot in the idealistic theory. If they are justified, idealism stands in need of pretty drastic revision; for surely idealism cannot surrender the coherence theory and at the same time retain its traditional form. Can the idealist satisfactorily meet these objections? The aim of the present paper is to indicate in outline the way in which they may perhaps be met. My excuse for venturing to discuss a problem which others more competent have discussed before me,—if an excuse for an independent consideration of a basic question be necessary,—is that to my mind something yet remains to be said on the problem which has not, so far as I am aware, been explicitly said. My thesis is that, if the coherence theory is to be saved, the transcendental principle of unity within experience upon which it insists and which it calls 'thought' or 'reason' must be brought definitely into touch with the concrete situations in which it is supposed to function and must be so defined as to imply an intelligible view of the temporal order; in short, that coherence must be so construed as to place the emphasis on organization of ends rather than mere abstract logical consistency.

## I

Historically, the coherence theory had its origin, I suppose, in the obligation which thinkers felt to meet the atomism of Hume and the utter scepticism implied by it. On the basis of such a theory as that which Hume,—logically enough, it would seem,—reared upon the premises of empiricism, no

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXI, 1912, p. 564.

tenable doctrine of truth could possibly be constructed. Kant's 'transcendental unity of apperception' was a statement of the counter theory. Hume places all of the emphasis on the discontinuity and discreteness among experiences; Kant, on the contrary, directs attention rather to the unity among experiences and to their mutual interrelations and implications. All of your experiences, Kant says in effect, from those of sensibility to those of the understanding, from sense-perception to scientific insight, have significance and meaning, and so may be called true or false, only as they are included within some sort of system, only as they are bound together in a kind of network of relations. And the coherence theory as thus put by Kant has been, in principle, the basis for all the later forms which the theory has taken. All along, then, the coherence theory has emphasized system as the criterion of meaning, and it has persistently insisted that apart from system there is no standard.<sup>1</sup>

As I apprehend the matter, this theory has been subjected to attack by pragmatists and others not primarily because it lays emphasis upon system and unity within experience, but rather because of the sort of unity upon which the chief emphasis is laid. According to the theory, the unifying principle is a kind of immanently 'constitutional' and 'organizational' reason, a thought-element which somehow holds over from one moment of experience to the next, an intellectual principle which is in some sense 'transcendental.' But the critics find that such a conception as this is open to at least two basic objections. In the first place, they hold, the unity thus posited by the theory is too far removed from, too externally related to, the concrete situations in which it is supposed to function; it is too much "a form or mode of some supra-empirical ego, mind or consciousness."<sup>2</sup> Hence "we must replace it by the doctrine that *only the relevant can be true*, and that the relevant must always be relative to a purpose."<sup>3</sup> And in the second place, it is held, the principle of unity assumed by the theory fails to do jus-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality*, Ch. VII.

<sup>2</sup> Dewey, *loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Schiller, *loc. cit.*

tice to the sort of unity which is actually found within concrete experience. As a matter of indisputable fact, experience grows in time and as a result it involves a considerable degree of discontinuity and hesitancy; but the unity posited by the coherence theory is timeless, and therefore the theory fails to discover any ultimate significance in the temporal order. Temporal discreteness seems on the face of it to have little to do with abstract consistency. In short, the coherence theory is incompetent to account for the reality of the time-order and implies that ultimately the temporal must be transcended as belonging to an inherently imperfect type of experience which cannot be regarded as of ultimate worth.

As regards the Kantian conception above referred to, it seems to me that such objections hold without question. In the place of Hume's atomic chaos Kant substitutes an *a priori* absolutism and calls it experience; but so far as one can see, nothing of value is gained by substituting one abstraction for another. It is perhaps natural that the theory in its origin should have taken such an abstract form, especially since the environment of its birth was as it was; but that is no justification for the theory in its abstract form. The truth is, the Kantian theory cannot do service as a genuinely helpful conception; the 'transcendental unity of apperception' is too high and dry, too much a *deus ex machina* forcibly introduced into the flow of experience for the purpose of redeeming it from sheer discontinuity and utter disruption. The principle here invoked is wholly outside of time, separated by an impassable chasm from every concrete situation in experience, and is as a result incapable of performing the very function which is its only excuse for being. The form which the coherence theory takes in the hands of Kant must therefore be surrendered; the pragmatists and temporalists are right in urging against it that it is an *unworkable* hypothesis and that it does violence to some rather obvious facts.

That the same objections hold with equal force against the later forms of the coherence theory is, however, not quite so



clear. The development of the theory since the days of Kant has changed it in certain important respects. It is a very serious mistake, I think, to put the so-called neo-Hegelian conception of coherence on a level with the Kantian doctrine and assume that they are equally abstract and vacuous. Certainly it is true that Hegel and the neo-Hegelians generally have *aimed* to define thought in terms more concrete than Kant was able to use and to bring the transcendental element within experience into more direct and vital contact with the concrete empirical situations in which it is meant to function, and they believe themselves to have succeeded. Nor can any one study Hegel's treatment of rationality as set forth in the *Phenomenology* and summarized in his conception of Absolute Knowledge, or a treatment like that which Professor Bosanquet,—to mention only one neo-Hegelian,—gives us in his *Logic* and his recent Gifford Lectures, without realizing this. And this fact should cause us to hesitate before lumping together without distinction all forms of the coherence theory and dealing with all as if they were in detail one and the same, and as if a criticism of one were likewise a criticism of all. The tendency on the part of the pragmatists to do precisely this has, as I grasp the controversy, rendered much of their polemic irrelevant.

Nevertheless, it undoubtedly is still open to question whether the coherence theory has yet been explicitly stated in such a way that it satisfactorily meets all of the difficulties which empiricists seem to find in it. Particularly does it seem true that the objections raised by temporalists have not sufficiently been taken into account. Any theory which confesses its incompetency to provide for the significance of the temporal order,—as the coherence theory does, for example, in the hands of Bosanquet and Bradley,—would seem to come dangerously near confessing bankruptcy. For surely, if there is any one characteristic of experience as we know it which is fundamental to it, it is its temporal aspect; what experience would be without this aspect no one can imagine, because it is absolutely basic. Bergsonism emphasizes something which is fundamental, and no theory of

truth and reality can explain that away and at the same time expect to have smooth sailing. I believe that the coherence theory can satisfactorily meet the objections of the pragmatists and temporalists, but in order to do so the systematic unity of experience upon which it insists must in certain respects be re-stated; at least the *locus* of emphasis must be shifted. What is needed seems to be not a denial of system, but a definition of system in terms of organization of ends. The exponents of the view have hitherto placed the emphasis too much upon logical consistency; and the result of this has been to produce in them a bias which has caused them to neglect to take account of the full significance of the fact that, by the implication of their own views, logical consistency is something which cannot be defined in the abstract and without direct reference to specific situations.<sup>1</sup>

## II

It is not my purpose to enter here into a discussion of the merits of the coherence theory. Space will not permit this, and in this paper my interest lies in another direction. I will presume, however, to state dogmatically my conviction that it is useless to talk of a theory of truth and error apart from the assumption of some sort of unity within experience. Presumably we have outgrown the old correspondence

<sup>1</sup> "When we say that logical consistency is the end and criterion of truth, we must give these terms a broader and more inclusive meaning than that which is often ascribed to them." Professor Creighton, "The Nature and Criterion of Truth," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XVII, 1908, p. 602. Professor Creighton has frequently urged the necessity of this; see particularly his articles, "Purpose as Logical Category," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XIII, 1904, p. 284, and "The Copernican Revolution in Philosophy," *ibid.*, Vol. XXII, 1913, p. 133. As I suppose, the later form of Professor Royce's philosophy tends more and more to a recognition of the same point. The changing emphasis of his views he himself notes in the preface to his Gifford Lectures, *The World and the Individual*, while in the second volume of *The Problem of Christianity* he presents what Professor Howison is inclined to call a new,—new, that is, for Professor Royce,—theory of knowledge.

theory, and there is no possibility of discovering either truth or error in such a mere string or succession of experiences as Hume would have us accept. To my mind truth is a value, and as a value it implies a standard. Furthermore, truth is a peculiar sort of value,—a value which, like goodness, requires a system in which to exist. Everything which is agreeable to the palate is pleasurable whether it is nutritious or the reverse; but not everything which we believe, indeed, not everything which we desire to believe and which we might perhaps be better off for believing, is on that account true. Truth is the expression of system; within the experience of which truth and error are in any intelligible sense predicable there must be some degree of unity. So much seems to me obvious. "There *is* meaning and rationality, law and unity in the mental life because we find them there;" <sup>1</sup> if we did not find them there, I do not see how we could intelligibly define truth. Furthermore, I am at a loss to know how to define this unity except in terms of thought or reason. There is no other feature of experience which could serve as the principle of such organization as we seem to find there. To call the principle 'life' or 'interest' does not help us much unless we state what precisely such terms are to be taken to mean; and when we attempt to define them we are ultimately driven back to rationality. At least so it seems to me. And consequently I am compelled to hold that some form of the coherence theory of truth is the only test of truth which we either have or need. And having said so much I will now pass on to the main issue.

If we assume that coherence is our criterion of truth, what precisely are we to mean by coherence? Can the doctrine that 'truth is the whole' be so interpreted as to meet the criticisms which we have noted above? I think so. But in order thus to define it, there are certain basic features of thought which must be explicitly recognized and insisted upon and the implication of which must be set in bold relief. In the space at my disposal here I can only refer to, and

<sup>1</sup> MacDougall, "The Self and Mental Phenomena," *Psychological Review*, Vol. XXIII, 1916, p. 7.



briefly attempt to justify, four which seem to be fundamental.

In the first place, thought must be explicitly defined as the principle within experience which includes the various so-called states of consciousness, both cognitive and emotional. It cannot be regarded as something radically and fundamentally different from perception, conception, memory, imagination, feeling, purpose, interest, and ideals; on the contrary, it must be conceived as manifesting itself precisely in and through these. It is not to be looked upon as an event over against these experiences, but as the principle which penetrates them and links them into a unitary whole. In short, it must be unequivocally identified with that principle of organization by means of which the various experiences of the individual may be said to belong to one and the same experience. This seems to be the first point on which the coherence theory must insist if it is to stand.

I am, of course, well aware that all of this will prove to be a very hard saying indeed in this day when 'behaviorism' and the new realism are contending that consciousness, even in the modest form of an inoffensive sort of 'awareness,' shall not retain its place in the sun. It requires some temerity to suggest not only that consciousness must be supposed to exist, but that it must be supposed to exist as a full-fledged and militant principle of organization within the various data which constitute its content. However, I do not see how the coherence theory of truth,—and it is the fortune of that theory we are here chiefly interested in,—can maintain itself without making precisely this assertion. Unless it is willing to go back to Kant's abstract 'transcendental' element, it cannot afford to separate thought and its manifestations; and, on the other hand, unless the theory digs the ground from under its own feet, it cannot deny connectedness among these data. Nor can I discover that the assertion thus forced upon the coherence theory is without justification on the basis of the facts; on the contrary, there seems to be ample warrant for it. Unquestionably there is some reality corresponding to what

has hitherto been called consciousness, and this reality is not a bare string of wholly disconnected and unrelated discretes. "Unity is an immediate and indefeasible reality of our experience. It is a fact,—if that of which one is thus immediately aware can be called a fact,—whose existence is neither posited nor inferred, but intuited."<sup>1</sup> At least it is certain that within any given pulse of attention, or within that sort of complex which we used to designate as a pulse of attention, there is unity, even if it consists in nothing more than preference of one datum over others. And where there is unity some principle of connection must be functioning, nor can I see how else that principle can satisfactorily be described except as judgment.

In the second place, if the coherence theory is to stand, thought must be interpreted by it as just that element which holds over from one moment of experience to another. Past, present, and future must be regarded as three aspects or phases of its total content. It cannot be conceived as a mere psychological event happening at a given moment and dying with it; it belongs to no single moment as an isolated part of the temporal flux. It is a principle rather than an *event* and its very nature is to be past, present, and future at once; it exists only in this tripartite manner. Such a position would seem to be essential to the coherence theory.

Just here we are face to face with the pragmatist's execration of the 'transcendental.' If thought is defined in this way, is it not abstracted from the concrete flow of experience and given a mysterious and equivocal character? How can thought function in a concrete situation if by hypothesis it cannot be identified with any given situation, cannot even be regarded as an element within such a situation? The complete answer to this question will concern us later. For the present what I wish to say is that, if the coherence theory is to hold its own, it seems to be reduced to the necessity of contending that thought is, in the sense above defined, 'transcendental.' For unless thought in some genuine sense overarches time, it is incompetent to bring the moments

<sup>1</sup> MacDougall, *loc. cit.*

of the time-order into vital contact with each other and consequently is incompetent to introduce continuity into the flux of experience. And once again, I cannot see but that such a position is well taken. Every normal individual acts, he acts in the light of ends, and these ends are to some extent and in some manner an expression of the individual's past history. It is in this way that character is built and knowledge grows, and it is after this fashion that each one is the architect of his own fortune. Within such a tripartite experience there must be some organizing principle which is neither wholly past nor wholly present nor wholly future, but in some real sense is all at once. To deny such a principle is to deny such an experience, and to deny such an experience is to make inscrutable intellectual achievement and to nullify the whole process of character-building. What this principle can be other than judgment it is not easy to see; certainly it seems true that thought is the characteristic of mind most nearly adequate to perform such a function. And if the principle is there and is of the nature described, then there is no great objection to dubbing it 'transcendental,' if by the term is meant just such a principle; obviously, the 'transcendental' in this meaning of the term is neither mysterious nor abstract.

In the third place, thought must be explicitly defined as a process of experimentation, trial and error, essentially temporal in its nature. Nor is this inconsistent with the characteristic just discussed; on the contrary, it would seem to be implied by it. Just because thought is inclusive of several moments of the temporal series, it cannot be said to belong to any one moment; precisely because it somehow overlaps past, present, and future, it can never be just past or present in its totality; in other words, thought by its very nature cannot be static. Since it is the principle of organization within the flow of experience, it must *ipso facto* be dynamic and evolving. The coherence theory must emphasize this point more unhesitatingly than it at times seems inclined to do; it must take seriously its contention that thought is a principle, not an event or 'state' of con-



sciousness, and it must not hesitate to draw the conclusion which this doctrine implies; otherwise, the theory will tend more and more to separate sharply meaning and time and to deny the real value of the temporal order.

That the coherence theory minimizes, if it does not completely deny, the significance of time is in the minds of many exponents of the theory no very serious objection to it. With such an opinion, however, one cannot unhesitatingly agree. Because time seems to be so fundamental in our experience, the theory which involves the necessity of reducing time to mere appearance gives us pause; such an implication is at least sufficient to establish a strong presumption that the theory is somehow poorly conceived. In any event, truth as we know it and must define it concerns present concrete experience, and such experience is without doubt shot through and through with time. And any definition of truth which is to hold its own cannot afford to overlook the apparent discreteness and discontinuity that are found there. Furthermore, one is at a loss to see how, if thought is defined as suggested above, it can be regarded as other than temporal in its nature. If it manifests itself in the various states of consciousness as the principle through which they secure that degree of organization which they do actually possess, and if this 'manifestation' of thought is taken in a sense sufficiently concrete to escape the sting of the pragmatist's unrelenting opposition to the 'transcendental,' then to my mind the criterion of truth as logical consistency turns out to be a progressive co-ordination of ends; that is, the criterion falls once for all within the temporal stream.<sup>1</sup>

In the fourth place, and finally, the coherence theory must go the length of saying that thought is in a very real sense objective. That is to say, the proponents of the

<sup>1</sup> "That what is ultimately real—the Absolute—must be beyond time and change and process, present all at once, does not seem to be a genuine requirement of our thought, but only a consequence of a system of logic from whose authority we find it difficult to free ourselves." Professor Creighton, *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXII, 1913, p. 143, note.

theory must insistently urge that thought is not a mere conscious state existent within some particular psychological history, not even the organizing principle of such an isolated experience taken in its isolation. They must rather contend that thought is to be found chiefly in the physical and social orders, in the world-process itself. Of course, they cannot deny, there is no reason why they should care to deny, that thought exists in psychological experience; but there they must regard it as something gradually to be attained, as an acquisition and not an endowment, a progressive process of creative effort which matures only through contact with the objective order and which becomes aware of its own fundamental nature through its unfolding. In short, *now!* thought must be said to have its habitat primarily in the objective order and only secondarily in the individual.

Any such position as this, however, will inevitably be an object of vigorous attack. If this territory is definitely occupied, all the heavy artillery of the enemies of the 'supra-empirical' and 'supra-psychological' will begin at once to thunder. If the coherence theory gives explicit or implicit recognition to any such trans-experiential principle as is suggested here, does it not thereby confess its own bankruptcy and justify its opponents' contention that it should forthwith and forever be consigned to the outer darkness of by-gone superstitions? In answer there are at least two things which ought to be said. The first of these is that any theory of truth which is worth considering must base its claims on some principle which in a very genuine sense transcends the limits of purely individual or psychological experience. If there is any one lesson which the history of philosophical inquiry from the time of the Sophists down to the present has taught us with unmistakable certainty, I should hold that lesson to be that a theory of truth which seeks its criterion in merely subjective experience ends at last in giving us no criterion at all. The basic difficulty which most of its critics have found in the pragmatic test itself is that it narrows its horizon to the subjective and consequently offers us no satisfactory and efficient standard; and

in every case the pragmatist feels it incumbent upon himself to point out that this is a mistaken interpretation of what he really means. Whatever may be the objections to the so-called 'supra-psychological' and however great may be the obstacles to occupying this 'no man's land,' the fact yet remains that the standard of truth exists there or nowhere; we,—all of us, pragmatists and idealists alike,—find our standard there or we fail in our quest. But are the obstacles involved in the occupancy of this territory real or imaginary? Do we have to leap over insuperable barriers to get there? This brings me to the second point I desire here to make. So far as the various 'states' of consciousness are concerned, it seems we must admit at once that they exist nowhere outside of a psychological experience; certainly this would appear to be true of all feelings, of memory and imagination, and of pure intuition, if there be such. But it hardly seems to be true in the same sense of rationality. Of course, no one can dispute the truth of the statement that my reason exists in my own individual mind; this fact undoubtedly has metaphysical implications of far-reaching importance. But it would seem to be equally true that my reason transcends my experiential limitations. In order to identify ourselves with objective rationality there is no obligation imposed upon us to lift ourselves by our own bootstraps; to be rational is just to be thus identified with the objective order of the universe. Surely science exists in no man's mind; but surely, also, every lowest son of Adam is in some sense capable of science. If reason were not 'supra-psychological,' the whole history of scientific achievement were utterly inscrutable, and, for that matter, the whole history of society and even of the individual himself. I have not space here to enter further into these matters; but I do not see how we can afford to deny, or why there should be any advantage in denying, what would seem to be an evident aspect of rationality, namely, that it is in a very intelligible sense more than merely psychological in its nature and function.

What I have been attempting to say in this section may be



summarized in some such way as the following. Thought, upon which the coherence theory lays so much emphasis, must not be supposed to be an abstract principle, standing over against the various states of consciousness which it somehow mechanically and mysteriously binds together into a unity; nor, on the other hand, must it be identified with these states. Rather must it be conceived as the principle of organization through which these states exist as they do exist and which, because it is a *principle*, is more than these states taken either distributively or collectively. Once again, because it is a principle of organization within experience, it must hold over from one moment to another; on the other hand, it is not non-temporal and cannot be so conceived, since organization *ipso facto* involves time. To speak of a timeless act of thought, as Green does, is a contradiction in terms, if thought is taken in the sense here insisted upon. Finally, thought is not a process which is confined wholly to an individual biography, as is a feeling of pleasure or a particular desire; thought is rather the principle of objectivity which spans the gulf between the individual and the world. All of these points perhaps have been made at one time or another by the adherents of the coherence theory; I am sure that some of them have elsewhere found expression in unmistakable terms. But they are points which more often than otherwise are ignored by the critics of idealism, and some of them even idealists themselves seem to my mind too prone to neglect. This is the excuse which I plead for having stated them once again; and if this brief account serves even to direct attention to them and to suggest their basic importance for the coherence theory, it will not have failed of its purpose.

### III

We are now in a position to inquire how the coherence theory may meet the two objections with which we began. Since these objections are basic and are the ones most frequently pressed, it may be assumed that others would hardly prove to be more formidable. Our discussion of them

must necessarily be very brief, but the analysis of the preceding section is perhaps sufficiently extended to suggest the lines along which a more elaborate discussion might proceed.

As regards the first objection, namely, that the coherence theory is too abstract to be of service in the detection and elimination of error and in the determination of truth, the answer must be that it does not hold of coherence as organization. Rational organization is in no sense abstract and it can only verbally be separated from the concrete situation. For organization is precisely the determination of the more and the less worthwhile within a given set of circumstances. The doctrine that 'the truth is the whole' means nothing more than that, under the conditions as they are discovered to be, the true is just that which meets the demand of experience for rational unity.

The pragmatist lays a great deal of emphasis, and rightly, upon the importance of the concrete problem which thought has to solve; and he defines truth in terms of that which is relevant to the problem in hand. And all of this, he is apparently inclined to think, is precluded from the coherence theory by the very nature of the theory itself. Such an assumption, however, is unjustifiable, if by coherence is meant organization. With the pragmatist's assertions that 'only the relevant is true' and that 'the relevant is relative to a purpose' the coherence theory is in complete agreement. But it does not stop here. It goes further and offers a standard by which the varying degrees of 'relevancy,' as well as the origin of the purpose through which the relevant has a meaning, may be determined. It is precisely because the pragmatist fails to do this that the idealist finds his theory of truth wanting in definiteness and finality. In order to supply this deficiency in the pragmatic method, the idealist feels that he must carry his quest for the goal beyond mere isolated, and therefore logically valueless, desires and interests; and he finds no place to rest short of the conception of a 'whole,' the organization of desires and interests. In short, coherence as organization lays as much emphasis as

pragmatism upon the problem which thought has to solve, and at the same time does not leave the question of the problem itself an unintelligible mystery. Thus, in answer to the pragmatist's challenge that the idealist show how his theory of coherence aids in the detection and elimination of error and in the definition of truth, the idealist may justly say: The coherence theory aids in this enterprise by explaining how it is possible for intellectual problems to emerge within experience and how what is relevant to the solution of those problems can be determined.

Nor does the coherence theory necessarily reduce all problems to one kind, namely, logical contradiction. It would perhaps do this, provided the reason 'immanent' within experience were defined entirely in isolation from the concrete situations in which it functions. But to give such an abstract definition of reason is just what the organizational theory refuses to do; (reason must be conceived concretely as the organizing principle within the total situation or it is incorrectly conceived.) Hence the rational cannot be reduced to terms of mere abstract contradiction, nor can all intellectual problems be regarded as aspects of such contradiction. "For the thought which has become expert in this world, such media as sound, colour, form, rhythm, and metre have undoubtedly a logic and a necessity of their own. . . . The rhythm that completes a rhythm, the sound that with other sounds satisfies the educated ear, the colour that is demanded by a colour-scheme, are I take it as necessary and as rational as the conclusion of a syllogism."<sup>1</sup> And the same may be said of interests, purposes, and feelings in so far as these are components of an organizational complex; they have a necessity, a rationality of their own. This, as I understand it, is precisely the position which the coherence theory is compelled to take. And from this point of view intellectual problems may be as varied as you please and any particular problem may be as novel and unique as experience can furnish.

The second objection,—that the unity implied by the

<sup>1</sup> Bosanquet, *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 62.



coherence theory is not the sort of unity found within actual experience,—is to my mind an objection which holds against the theory as generally conceived. For the coherence theory has tended to exaggerate the continuity of experience and to minimize the obvious discontinuity and disruption which are found there. It finds difficulty in satisfactorily dealing with the novel in experience and in giving due weight to the significance of the fact of selective attention. The supporters of the theory have not infrequently ended by insisting that selective attention is characteristic of an essentially imperfect type of experience, that teleology is an inadequate category, and that the novel is in the last analysis unintelligible,—in short, that, the real is timeless and the temporal order is mere appearance. Indeed, this conclusion is so generally held by idealists that it has usually been taken as an inevitable implication of the coherence theory, an implication which the critics regard as fatal.

However, I cannot but feel that if coherence is in dead earnest identified with organization, the situation must be differently viewed. For, in the first place, organization implies discontinuity and hesitancy, selection and evaluation; apart from these organization is impossible. If there were an experience in which disruption and selection did not occur, it would be an experience of which organization could in no intelligible sense, in no sense comprehensible to us, be predicated. Out of selection, and out of selection alone, comes organization. But selection is by implication a process. And this leads me to remark, in the second place, that organization is by its very nature expressible only in time. If there were a timeless experience, an experience which knows no leanings and possesses no will, it also would be an experience of which organization could in no intelligible sense be predicated. Organization is in its very essence dynamic and could not characterize that which by hypothesis is static.

From these considerations two conclusions seem to me to follow. The first is that, so far as concrete human experience is concerned, coherence as organization satisfactorily meets

all of the relevant facts. It is certain that disruption and selection are no obstacles in the way of its acceptance; on the contrary, one finds it impossible to imagine what organization could possibly mean apart from them. Selective evaluation and the progressive introduction of continuity within discontinuity is precisely what we mean by organization. The second conclusion is that, if coherence is identified with organization, then it is inconsistent to hold that the coherence theory of truth saddles us with a block universe and a timeless Absolute. From this point of view the only intelligible definition of reality which can be given is that it is a purposive, selective, volitional process; and such an assertion as Professor Bosanquet's, that "it seems unintelligible for the Absolute or for any perfect experience to be a will or purpose,"<sup>1</sup> appears to be wholly without justification. The truth is that a perfect experience defined in terms other than those having a temporal reference is to us incomprehensible; the temporal alone is intelligible. This implication of the organizational theory undoubtedly leads us into new difficulties. But whatever these difficulties may prove to be and however formidable they may appear, it is better for us to accept them and resolutely grapple with them than to minimize and ultimately deny the significance of some of the obvious facts of experience. For the alternative confronting us really seems to be this: either the organizational theory, accepted with explicit avowal of its implications concerning the ontological value of time, or the admission of the final bankruptcy of the concept of a 'world.'

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 393.

## TIME AND THE LOGIC OF MONISTIC IDEALISM

JOSEPH ALEXANDER LEIGHTON

I UNDERSTAND by monistic idealism the philosophical standpoint common to Hegel, Bradley, Bosanquet, and Royce (in his earlier writings, including *The World and the Individual*). It identifies the characteristic features of truth and reality, to the extent of holding that the standard is the same for both. Systematic coherence, harmonious organization, the wholeness of a cosmic individuality which takes up into itself and transforms into constituent factors in one perfect totality all lesser degrees of individuality,—these are various ways of stating the absolute standard of truth and reality. Nothing is real in isolation or in independence of anything else. The reality of any thing, person, or event is determined by its degree of organization, of individuality, as a constituent factor in the absolute and perfect totality of being. So also with the system of truth. No single judgment is true out of relation to all other judgments. Truth is a coherent organization in the all-inclusive whole, a super-organic system of truth. Truth, like reality, is a systematic individuality. Some sub-systems of judgments are truer than others, because the former have more systematic coherence, more organization, more individuality; that is because they have at once more sweep of import and more internal harmony of texture.

That coherence or freedom from contradiction in a system, membership in an organized totality of experience, is a valid criterion of truth I do not question. I am prepared to maintain that the harmonious organization of experience into a reflectively apprehended and coherent totality of insight, in which every single item of knowledge or experience, and consequently every specific judgment, develops its full intent and implication only when seen in relation to other items of



knowledge and other judgments, is the most adequate *regulative ideal* of truth. I should be ready to show (if this were the place) that pragmatism as a method really presupposes, when its implications are fully thought out, the coherence criterion and that without it the new logical realism can be nothing more than the subjective and introspective analysis by every thinker of what he finds in his own so-called intuitions.

But monistic idealists have been wont to go farther than this (Hegel, Bradley, and Bosanquet, for example), and to maintain that the coherence ideal is more than a regulative ideal in truth-seeking. They have been wont to affirm that it expresses the ultimate and eternal structure of reality, and they have understood this to mean that absolute reality is forever one completely harmonious and timelessly perfect whole.

Their metaphysical use of the principle of coherence involves the reduction of the whole temporal order of experience to a mere appearance of a timeless whole, with the additional result that they are equivocal (Hegel), or cryptic and unintelligible (Bradley and Bosanquet), both as to how the timelessly perfect reality comes to appear as a discrete succession of temporal events, and as to what may be the status of the humanly significant features of the temporal order in this timeless absolute.

The treatment of the problems of causality and teleology by monistic idealists affords capital illustrations of these defects. The difficulties involved in thinking out causation,—the puzzle of continuity, that is, the selection of a point when the cause ceases and the effect begins; the question whether there is any interval of time between them; the manner in which empty time can make a difference in the maturation of a causal process; the fact that what are commonly selected as the causes of a phenomenon are more or less arbitrarily picked out from an indefinite multitude of conditions; the problem of the endless regress of terms and relations and the so-called plurality of causes,—all these are regarded as inescapable difficulties, to be solved only by recognizing that

the causal relation is an incomplete or phenomenal expression of the principle of timeless ground or logical system. Carry out this solution to its logical conclusion and the causal relation is then simply one of the forms of illusory (and unaccountable) appearance, in a temporal plurality, of the one eternal system. If there are no real elements, really interactive and inter-patient, then the whole temporal process is inscrutably appearance. The monistic idealist, when asked what use causal conceptions have in practical life and in science, can only reply that they are useful fictions for dealing with phenomena. In the system of timeless reality there can be no causes and no effects. The idealist of this type never faces the dilemma: either causal changes affect 'real' reality and reality is then not a timeless totality, or they do not affect reality and then experiential actuality is an illusion. No wonder that the biological evolutionist or the experimental physicist, when told that this is philosophy, passes it by with silent contempt.

On the other hand, the monistic idealist's treatment of causality is a natural consequence of his manner of taking the principles of identity of nature, and continuity of being, as logical *leit-motifs* for a theory of science and reality. Bosanquet has, with especial insight and fertility of illustration, argued for the principle of identity-in-difference as the fundamental law of thought and reality. But I think that he transcends the bounds of a logic of science or a logic of experience in his use of this principle. He passes insensibly from similarity of type, in quality or relationship, between discrete entities to ontological identity. All that a logic of science need postulate of its objects is that, though both qualitatively and quantitatively discrete, they are operative in relations which can be classified into types. All the community of condition that the objects which enter into a specific field of science need possess is *mutual relevancy of behavior*.

Elemental entities may be related so that they are capable of being made a whole for thought, as exhibiting an intelligible tissue of relationships, while yet they are discrete

members in a moving or developing system, such as the cells in an organism or, still better, the individual members of a society. The law of identity properly means that to judge and infer we must postulate that there are *individua* which may be regarded for purposes of logic and science as *invariant* objects of thought.

I am willing to admit that all actual entities or *individua*, and all relationships which they sustain, must be, *now* or at any other given moment of time, internal to the totality of the real. To say this is to say no more than that, in knowing, we are dealing with our data as parts of a universal order, whatever that may be. But this settles nothing as to the relative degrees of independence and self-determination to be accorded to the individual members of the total reality. It settles nothing whatever as to the specific characters and degrees of interrelationship of any two or more entities or types of entity.

I admit that, to comprehend the ground of the being and behavior of anything, or of the occurrence of any event, is to gain an insight into the system of connections or determinate orders in which that specific datum lives and moves and has its being. Every sustained effort towards the reflective organization and the unification of empirical data involves the *faith* that the Universe with which thought traffics is in a considerable degree an orderly or systematic whole, the successive phases of whose history are in part at least intelligibly continuous.

But to admit all this settles nothing as to the precise degree and manner in which the being and behavior of any elemental entity has its ground respectively within and without itself, or as to the degree in which the successive phases of the actual behavior and qualities of anything that is real could be now determined, if one had a complete insight into the totality of relationships in which all real entities at present stand to one another.

If time and change are to disappear from our interpretation of reality just in the measure in which that interpretation nears completeness, then both mechanical-causal and tel-



eological interpretations of the experience-process vanish or become meaningless just when they reach their fruitions. In brief, if the logical ideal of knowledge is taken to involve the absolute monistic conception of reality as the timeless whole or system, then both the experience from which the thinker sets out and the logical activity of his thinking are illusory guides which lure him only to self-annihilation and the annihilation of his world.

Knowledge means the comprehension at once of the mutual relevancies or orderly relationships of the many distinct entities which constitute reality, and of the uniqueness of the being of each entity. It means both the grasp of the successive phases of actuality as orderly series or continuous sequences, and the recognition of the uniqueness of each phase in the temporal process or order.

The principle of continuity is illegitimately used as a scientific method, if it be taken to mean that, in the determination of causal sequences and in the formulation of laws of change, the discrete moments of experience must be made continually smaller and smaller until they disappear in a timeless continuity of being. The principle of continuity legitimately means that analysis of a process or complex should be carried as far as possible. But there are elemental discontinuities in the qualitative processes of even the physical world. There are many kinds of critical points in physical and chemical changes. There are still more complex and striking discontinuities in vital and psychical processes. All that continuity means, with reference to the analysis and comprehension of change, is contained in the notions of *order* or *serial sequence* and of the *conservation* of the most elemental features of the process throughout the transformation; for example, the continuity of space, time, energy, and mass in physics. Continuity means in physics the quantitative conservation of energy, but with significant qualitative discontinuities; in the philosophy of spirit, the metaphysics of ethics and religion, it means conservation of values with significant creativity of values.

The treatment of teleology in the logic of eternalistic or

monistic idealism is even more equivocal than the treatment of causation. Although idealism would seem to imply, if it have any single implication, a teleological conception of reality, yet since teleology involves time and discrete terms or novelties, the eternalistic or monistic idealist is forced to regard teleology as a form of appearance just as causation in general is, though indeed a higher and somewhat truer form of appearance, since teleological continuity has more individuality of organized system than causal continuity. Even Royce, notwithstanding his speculative ingenuity in the treatment of time and the deeds and destinies of finite selves, fails to show how these temporal deeds and lives can be constituent elements in a timeless whole, the Eternal Self. Bosanquet's position is more consequent. For him, the absolute timeless whole is not a self and teleology is a sub-form of individuality. Therefore, personality is, of necessity, an appearance, although, since one appearance differeth from another in glory, a personality is more real than a mere biological individual and this in turn more real than an atom. But personal immortality is of no central importance in eternalistic idealism. Progress takes place in the absolute whole or individual, but this does not progress as a whole. How progress can take place in such a whole we are not told. What sort of teleology is admissible from this viewpoint? The teleology of an eternally perfect organization, a cosmos, the timeless self-maintenance of the absolute individuality. By an endless series of compensating adjustments, interplays, and redistributions of factors in its finite and temporal constituents, the timeless Absolute maintains its equipoise. Let us be specific. In that minute, ephemeral part of the Absolute's life which we may call the present terrestrial international maelstrom, what appears to its constituent atoms to be a considerable disturbance is now going on. Suppose the United States enters the fray, and suppose, further, that the Central Powers are forced to sue for peace in 1918. A redistribution of political sovereignties takes place. A League of Democratic Nations to enforce peace is formed. A profound and far-reaching social reorganiza-

tion and integration is slowly and toilsomely achieved. Political, economic, and social life; art, literature, science, education, and religion are greatly modified. Suppose that in the total outcome the twenty-first century should differ from the nineteenth much more than the sixteenth from the tenth century of our era. What has happened from the standpoint of the Absolute? This important teleological alteration in civilization (important from the most comprehensive human point of view) cannot alter the absolute individual, or disturb its passionless serenity one whit. Suppose we call the change 'progress.' Then, in the Absolute, there must have been going on, in the opposite direction, a retrogressive equalizing change, by which the serene equipoise of the Absolute is maintained. In the Absolute there is neither gain nor loss in existence or value, only the Eternal Calm. Human beings strive with might and main for the creation of new values, but there must be always a compensating process of annihilation of values, in order that the Absolute's perfection may not be marred or its repose ruffled.

Thus, on the whole, progress is an illusion. And what motives dictate the conclusion? Not the motives of a logic of experience, but of a logic by which the meaning of experience is condemned *ab ante* under the rule of the canons of absolute self-identity, changeless self-maintenance, the exclusive perfection and value of the timelessly coherent system, a logic which springs from the same motives as quietism in morals and contemplative, world-fleeing mysticism in religion.

I submit that the idealist cannot keep his cake and eat it in this temporal world. If he can do both in his Absolute, he is more than human, and mere humans cannot follow him. He cannot be a devotee of the timeless Absolute and a teleologist. Purpose, value, progress, selfhood, individuality, are categories that have meaning and validity only in application to a temporally pluralistic universe. The absolute, all-inclusive, timeless individual is a static mechanism, even though it be christened 'spirit' by its devotees. The baptismal ceremony does not magically spiritualize it. Intrinsic



values inhere and operate only in conscious selves who act to achieve and create and conserve experienced values. This activity is the only kind of purposiveness one can clearly conceive. Unconscious teleology is such only in the light of, and in subservience to, conscious teleology. Teleology means process and hence involves time. A timeless whole is non-teleological, hence mechanical.

The fundamental issues in a philosophy which faces the problem of time and evolution, and is not content to pass it over with cryptic sayings as to its being an 'appearance,' 'transmuted,' 'absorbed,' or 'transcended' in the Eternal Absolute, are the relative positions to be occupied by the categories of continuity and discreteness in the interpretation of experience. Continuity and discreteness are the basic categories of science and metaphysics and hence of logic. Every other category,—causation, change, substance, teleology, individuality,—is a sub-form blended of continuity and discreteness, of the universal or relation, which, taken by itself, seems a timeless type, and the individual, the 'this,' which is the discretely experienced fact or appreciating, interested, attitude-taking self that lives and traffics in time. Bradley and Bosanquet have indeed seen the problem in its irreducible elements, but their Absolute solves the problem by abolishing its more basic and substantive factor, the immediate, discrete, temporal reality. Their absolute, timeless individuality abolishes individuality.

I have not space here for more than dogmatic assertion and hints. I must, therefore, be content to say that, in logic and metaphysics, if our interpretations are to be adequate to the nature of experience and the ineluctable quality of life, which we seek to understand and to sublimate into thought-forms, we must recognise that discreteness, in the form of qualitative novelty as well as of quantitative multiplicity in its elements and in the serial orders of its evolutionary processes, is to be taken as an inexpugnable feature of reality.

The same logical error is found in the absolute monistic idealists as in Spinoza. The principle of ground, located in a timeless sytem, is made both the canonical criterion of

knowledge and the constitutive principle of being. But, for a logic of experience, the principle of ground is neither logically nor psychologically primitive. It is derived, by a process of abstractive construction, from the principle of causation, which I take to be identical with the principle of sufficient reason. *There must be sufficient grounds for every occurrence:* this is a postulate of science. 'Cause' is the sufficient temporal ground of an event. The relation of cause and effect is logically primitive. It is not legitimate to seek the sufficient ground of temporal occurrence in a non-temporal systematic ground. Such procedure is a passage into an entirely different genus. And it is absurd to seek a sufficient ground for the original structure of reality. That structure is its own eternal ground.

It follows that the postulate of continuity or uniformity is illegitimately used, if it be taken to imply that all qualitative discreteness and temporal discontinuity must be metamorphosed into absolute homogeneity and timeless continuity. The monistic idealist seems here the slave of the logical vice of which Herbert Spencer's legerdemain in producing heterogeneity from homogeneity is so signal an example. (Continuity means nothing more than that there are types of relationships or relevancies of one element of reality to others (the types to be empirically determined), and that, in so far as qualitatively similar elements are found in temporally discrete situations, qualitatively similar sequences may be expected. The postulate of uniformity is that the same causes will probably have the same effects. Nothing is implied as to how far the same causes are ever actually repeated.) Reality as experienced (including the results of the most rigorous analysis in 'experience') is an indefinitely vast and loosely related system of qualitative complexes, ever producing new qualitative complexes. Actual reality shows indefinite gradings of relevancies and irrelevancies among its *individua*. (We isolate now this now that type of relevancy, but perhaps no two moments in the temporal process are ever exactly the same.)

I would then substitute for the principle of identity-in-

difference, as the primary postulate of scientific thinking, the *principle of relevancy or the principle of similarity of relationships*. All science and all intelligent practice proceed upon the assumption that there are discoverable types of relationship between the qualities of the real and between those complexes of qualities which constitute individual elements of the real. To say that one type of sequence or co-existence is relevant to another case, present or prospective, is to say that there is here a similarity of relationship in the behavior of different groups of things, sequent or co-existent as the case may be.

Instead of turning the postulate of continuity into the demand for a timeless identity of being, a changeless self-maintenance of being, I hold that continuity, as a logical postulate, means nothing more than the demand that analysis of the co-existential or sequential data shall be carried to as fine a point as may be, without substituting for experienced fact conceptual fictions that are non-experiential in the sense that they never have been and never could be experienced under conceivable conditions. Such a conceptual fiction is the principle of 'timeless ground.' (Instead of taking the principle of coherence or consistency to mean that every thing and event must somehow now and always be transmuted into the timeless perfection of the absolute system, I would take the principle of coherence as a *regulative ideal* or demand of both thought and feeling-volition: the demand of thought to satisfy itself by attaining the fullest consistency or coherent relevancy in the interrelationships of the elements of the temporal process; the demand of feeling volition for the fullest harmony of organic unity of personal experience.)

Thus, the sound standpoint in both logic and metaphysics for me is not an organic eternalism but *organizational* Temporalism. In other words, experience is in process of organization,—personal, social, and cosmical,—and the function by which it fulfils itself and ministers to life is the furtherance of the organization of reality and, through this organization, the harvesting of richer values in experience.

A teleologically ordered universe must be pluralistic in



the status and relationships of its elements. The kinds and degrees of unity and continuity in such a universe can be determined empirically only in the light of a recognition of original and persisting discretenesses, the plurality of many *individua* or unitary, qualitative complexes in multiple relationship. The original continuity of the universe can consist only in the original interdependencies, or orders of relationship, among the plural entities which constitute it. The permanent continuity (if there be such) can consist only in the active perduration and increase (perhaps) of the societal or *solidaire* interdependence of its elements, as these are modified and modify others, are engendered and engender other elements, in the ordering process of the whole. Thus the only admissible eternity is that of the perduration of an active ground of order, direction, and harmony, enduring and growing in its scope as energizing being, through the increase and fruition of the elemental constituents of its world in their internal harmonies and societal interdependences.

The only metaphysical conception that will square with the logic of actual experience is thus temporalistic pluralism. By this I mean a metaphysics which holds that there can be no reality which does not traffic in time, no timeless being or beings; which holds it absurd to suppose time and process to have had beginnings, since beginnings imply temporal antecedents, and therefore equally absurd to suppose a surcease of temporal process; which holds that the actual changefulness, the epigenetic movement of reality towards fuller, richer, more harmonious individuality, as one passes, in one's survey, from qualitative discontinuities in the physical order to more striking discontinuities in the vital, psychical, and historical-cultural orders, is inconceivable, unthinkable, and inexplicable, unless we suppose that a plurality of discrete elements (many *individua*), entering into a multitude of transactions with each other, give rise to further temporally discrete, and therefore novel, entities in the ceaseless dynamic process of actuality.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The above essay is a very summary abstract of the underlying logic of my forthcoming work, *Personality and the World*.

## THE DATUM

WALTER BOWERS PILLSBURY

EVERY philosophy, and for that matter every science, presupposes a datum, something upon which it may build. This it is that gives justification for the later developments and upon it later statements are made to rest. Unfortunately in science and philosophy, and even in common sense, no agreement exists as to what the datum is or even as to what its function should be. One man's datum is another man's conclusion, and *vice versa*. Systems can obviously be divided into two great groups on the basis of the kind of datum they assume or seek. For one, the datum is a general principle or a system of principles, or abstractions of other sorts; for the other, the datum is a more or less concrete experience. On the one hand, we have Plato, Spinoza, Kant, and Hegel, together with the mathematicians and all rationalists; on the other, stand Hume and the positivists, in less degree, Locke, Condillac, Avenarius, and the empirical scientists. For the first school, observation must give way to universal laws and pre-established principles; for the second, these principles derive their validity, so far as they have validity, from their agreement with experience. The two schools are as far apart as it is possible to be in statement and in temperament.

Closer examination shows that the differences are more in the general statements and the ideals of what should be the nature of truth or of proof than in the actually accepted first principles. Neither accepts the actually experienced as the given, and both implicitly or explicitly look to the given for the justification of their principles. This first statement is self-evident and self-asserted for the conceptualists. They deny that they need, or even that there is, immediate experience. The warrant they usually find in something superior

or anterior to experience. As we shall see, however, they all finally come back to the primary experience they deny to exist as final warrant for their statements. The *soi disant* empiricists, however, are not so close to immediate experience as they would have us believe. What they assume is really not experienced, but is a concept assumed to explain experience. The sensations of Locke and Condillac, even the impressions and ideas of Hume, are never found in real consciousness. They are unlike any actual objects or mental states. They are regarded as elements from which real things or ideas may be compounded, but the strongest upholder of the sensational doctrine would not claim that any one actually experiences them. Like the general principles of the rationalists, they are constructions, and their only excuse for being is that they may serve to explain how experience is possible or might be possible. These views are empirical only in so far as they assert that all must have come in some way through experience, but when they attempt any positive explanation, they at once deviate widely from experience. Even Hume in his positive constructions lays himself open to the same charge, although on the negative side he disposes of all that any one could wish to eliminate.

In the more recent systems, the theory of Avenarius and the similar doctrine of Wundt in some of his later writings most nearly approach a truly empirical datum. The assumption is that all goes back to a pure experience in which at first there is neither mental nor physical, but from which all that is physical or mental may develop as a result of more or less conscious thought and comparison. The original experience has neither things nor mental states and even nothing of reference to things or mental states, but out of it we build our things or substantive elements and also our general laws. Even in this theory we do not get back to real experience. Their immediate experience is unintelligible because it has not been interpreted; the world as we know it is a development of a more or less arbitrary sort from that. Here again we deal not with the immediately known but



with an inference from that known, which has been made to explain it. The world of pure experience is a pure assumption, on the same level as Plato's ideas or Kant's categories or Locke's sensations. It is an imaginary picture of how knowledge might have developed. It is assumed, not really given.

While none of these theories discovers the real datum, they all imply it. All that is necessary to find it is to put their implications in the place of their direct assertions. What all imply is that we are immediately aware of something,—that we know, without emphasis upon either the 'we' or the knowing or the thing known. After accepting this they each and all try to reduce it to something else, to sensations or mental states, to atoms or to ions, to concepts or categories, and when once they have started upon the process of reduction, they forget the starting point and mistake their assumptions and conclusions for the really given or the immediately known. As opposed to the pure experience of Avenarius, it is that experience as it has been developed by each individual for his practical needs and before he has transformed it by trying to discover what it is as knowledge and how it originates. It is just the table as I write upon it and the pen with which I write and the ideas that come or will not come or at least the feeling of discouragement that I fail to express them as I wish that I could. These are the realities; these are immediate; these are the data with which every science, every philosophy, and for that matter every practical man in his practical moods must start, whether he explain them or merely use them. In other words, it is the real experience as it exists at any given moment; it is experience produced by all of the forces of life, after everything has acted upon it that really does act upon it, rather than any abstraction, whether the simple elements out of which experience may be assumed to be compounded or an undeveloped matrix assumed to be present before the various forces have worked upon it in any way. It is the completed knowledge, or at least the actual knowledge, rather than the embryo knowledge. It is the whole and the immediate rather than the analyzed or the abstract.

To make the assumption that the given is the experience as we actually have it, rather than some abstraction which will explain that experience, amounts almost to an inversion of the ordinary statement. It consist practically in standing the usual philosophical or scientific system upon its head. To be sure, such systems tacitly assume this datum as they begin their discussions but assume it only to forget it. They become involved in sensations or concepts or universals or *a priori* forms or categories, on the one side, and in atoms, ions, ether, and what not, on the other, and in these they forget the reality with which they started. They even attempt to pass off these assumptions as reality when they become fully sophisticated, although they are struck now and again with the differences between what they have in immediate experience and the results of their various constructions. They check up by comparison with the real from time to time. Like Antæus, they receive new strength when they touch the earth, but the contacts are so far apart that they are prone to disregard the source of their virility.

Granting that the datum is the immediate knowledge or is to be found in things as they are, obviously we must attempt to come to closer quarters with it by way of description or definition. This is difficult because of its very simplicity or immediateness. One cannot describe the datum without comparing it with something else, and the description is likely to be taken seriously as meaning that it is something else. One may attempt, as in the game of twenty questions, to run it to earth by answering yes or no to a number of the more frequent disjunctions. First, is it mental or material? One must deny that this question may be asked. The datum is indifferent to the distinction. Mind and matter are both ways of interpreting the actually given, but the datum itself may be regarded as either or both without changing its fundamental character. One thing must be asserted positively, and that is that the given as such does not divide into two parts, a mental and a physical. It may have mental aspects and physical aspects, but one part cannot be said to be mental, the other physical, as is so frequently asserted.

In any case the datum is primary and real; the interpretation is secondary. One may therefore leave the discussion of the interpretations for the present.

A second fundamental question is whether the datum has meaning or acquires it. To this the answer is unquestionable: the datum is meaning. Nothing can be appreciated without meaning. One must assert with Woodbridge that awareness and meaning are identical. The datum is just what it means.<sup>1</sup> *What* it may be as thing or idea may be open to dispute; it may even be disputed whether it be thing or idea, but there never can be any dispute over whether or not it has meaning. One must object to the assertion of Bradley that one may be aware of mental states first and ascribe meaning to them later. Awareness and meaning go hand in hand and one cannot be discriminated from the other. Something does not come into awareness as a meaningless somewhat and then gradually assume meaning; on the contrary, it does not exist before it acquires meaning and when it exists it is just that meaning. Much the same statement may be made with reference to Dewey's assertion that the judgment confers a meaning upon a meaningless somewhat and thus makes possible the distinction between the meaningful and the antecedent meaningless. Everything in experience must have already been judged before it can be an experience. We have in awareness only the results of judgments. Nothing exists before judgment of some sort has been passed upon it. In short, then, all philosophy and all science must begin with a material that has already been interpreted and understood, not with any form of raw material. It has for the most part been interpreted and understood only in the light of practical needs; the question as to what it may be in itself has not yet been asked about it, but it must be assumed to be the result of much elaboration rather than a mere first raw material.

To assert that the given is just the real experience does not take us very far on the way to an answer to any of the ques-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the writer's "Meaning and Image," *Psychological Review*, Vol. XV, 1908, p. 150.



tions that any one is really interested in. One cannot have real explanation or any science or philosophy if one stops with that statement. One may be quite willing to admit that trees and men are seen, that men reach certain conclusions as they reason, that they feel certain emotions when defeated, but no one who thinks at all deeply can stop there, and most are inclined to feel that any one of these admitted facts is subordinate to and less real than its explanation. One must not merely insist that all goes back to the given but must also leave room for an explanation of the given. The most frequent interpretation of the datum is found in the assertion that experience is of things, is of external reality, with the implication that this external reality is to be taken for granted. In the different sciences the original experience is referred to laws, particular or general, and to elements of one type or another. In the crudest forms of these external explanations, reality is said to be composed of atoms or of four elements, combined in different ways. These are obviously only explanations or interpretations; there is nothing in them of direct observation. Yet the men who proposed them took them with the utmost seriousness and believed that the atoms were real, while the actual experience was only appearance.

This tendency to believe in the interpretations as the realities, and in the datum,—sounds, colors, sticks, and stones,—as deceptive, is universal. Explanations are and must be made by every one in all connections, whether he be scientist or philosopher or the man in the street. There is also a tendency with every one to regard the interpretation as real, as even more real than the datum. But when asked what the real interpretation is, difference of opinion is bound to arise, since in almost every case there is not one interpretation but many, and the advocate of each holds his alone to be adequate. One can both illustrate what must be meant by the given and show the necessity for interpretation, if one considers the position of a red light in space. The immediate datum is that the red light is directly ahead ten feet distant from the eye. That all would agree upon. It is the

datum for each observer in the same position. But the physiologist will at once say that the red color cannot be in space because there is nothing there to appreciate it. It can be no more than a stimulus of some sort upon the retina of the eye. The physicist must then explain that it is only the source that is ten feet away, but that from the source the light is carried in some way. The psychologist connects this fact, that lights always seem to be where they (or the stimuli) are not, with a statement of the conditions of seeing distance. This solves the problem from his standpoint. One may add the interpretation of the physiologist regarding transmission to the cortex and any of the psychological laws involved. Each of these is an interpretation from a different point of view and each may well claim to be real. Obviously, however, not all can be real, and in strict impartiality it is difficult to see that one has a better claim to reality than any of the others. The one thing that cannot be doubted is that the red light is out there ten feet from the eye. All explanations start from that and none can be true that does not in some way harmonize with that statement, whatever form it may be given in the course of the explanations.

This does not mean that the realist's interpretation of the given is any more true than any of the others. The datum is not necessarily given as a thing. The assertion that it is external is no more immediately certain than the assertion that it is mental. To assert that it is externally real at once raises the question whether it is real as a red color, real as a vibration rate, and if a vibration rate whether in ether or as a form of electrical energy, or real as a chemical substance or as a continuing chemical reaction. It must be at least three of these at once and no one can be said to be more real than any other. Probably neither the physicist nor the chemist would be willing to admit the real existence of the red color, although that alone is really experienced, and no two interpreters would quite agree as to where the end of the analysis that constitutes the real is to be found. This assertion of external reality does not simplify our problem, does not furnish an unambiguous interpretation upon which all

can agree, and obviously therefore cannot be assumed as an axiom. With that assertion we pass away from our datum to an explanation.

Exactly the same remarks may be made of the idealist's attempt to reduce all experience to sensation or consciousness or idea. This again is an explanation for which much evidence can be brought, but to reduce a red light ten feet from the eye to a red sensation *plus* double images of background, *plus* strain sensations, *plus* memories of other spaces, etc., in the familiar psychological way, does not leave the original experience in existence. The datum must be the more real and unless these explanations can be shown to make possible the original they fail even as explanations. Of the two forms of explanation the realistic more nearly conforms to the natural inclinations of the ordinary man. Still neither is real in the same sense as the datum, if universal acceptance be taken as the test of reality.

But to assume that the datum, the immediate awareness, is the real does not mean that explanation is to be denied all value. It is not necessary that an explanation be accepted by all, or even that the different explanations should be consistent, to give each value. The utility of the explanation needs no advocate. The explanation that is no more than a reference of one event to other similar ones makes statement more easy, and at the same time gives a basis for the anticipation of other events. In practice it is easier to foresee the future, if one has a theory and the outcome justifies the theory. Much of the test as well as the justification of theory or any other form of explanation is pragmatic: partly the test of practical application, partly the test of working in harmony with other experiences. It is this effectiveness of explanations in furthering practical ends, in furnishing the means of advancement, in the designing of instruments, the building of useful articles and machines that tends to make the explanation seem more real even than the datum. All of the illusions and inconsistencies of immediate experience can be made to disappear in the conceptual construction, so that each in its place will provide a safer ground for



thought and for action than the datum itself. For all of these reasons, as well as because it satisfies the instinct of curiosity, we cannot avoid theorizing and explaining.

Even in the most fundamental theories, where inconsistency is most prevalent, there need be no difficulty in making use of explanations. One must in these cases, however, accept the explanation as a means to an end, must consider its utility, and not expect absolute consistency. If the justification of an explanation is its usefulness, there is no reason why one should not use one as far as it will go, then choose another. Our red light may be a vibration rate, the decomposition of lithium salts, the stimulation of a peculiar nerve tissue, and even an elementary sensation, all at the same time. The objection felt by the traditional philosopher seems to depend upon the belief that his explanation must be something final and absolute, that it, not the datum, is real. If that be real, it is assumed that it is *the* real and that to assert two reals at the same time and in the same place involves inconsistency. To permit different explanations reduces the universe to chaos. Take the explanation less seriously, assume that facts are facts no matter what they are called, and the difficulty vanishes. The red light is the real. You do not change it by calling it a sensation or an electric wave or a retinal excitation; you change the class into which you put it,—you change its name,—but all that does not affect the reality. Thinking about it or talking about it does it neither good nor harm, whatever good or harm it may do the philosopher himself or however it may advance or retard the science.

There is no reason why one should not be both a realist and an idealist, or admit the truth of one's realistic and one's idealistic attitudes. One must admit that there are subjective phases of experience and objective phases of experience. While it is good discipline and good exercise in argument to reduce all external reality to idea, or all ideas, through complicated mechanical hypotheses, to interactions between different forms of matter, it does not change the character of the datum, and does not show that the other

interpretation is not still possible. In connection with the body-mind relation, for example, one can find good proof that an experience is conscious, that it is made possible by a brain state, and that it is ultimately a thing in the physical universe, but it is not possible at present to show that either one or the other is not true nor is it possible to reduce all three separate explanations to a single consistent one. From our present point of view it is convenient to let them all stand side by side. The primary fact or datum is the same whichever be true. One may add the pious hope that some day it will be possible to combine them all and that this ultimate explanation, whether formula or phrase, will be the real truth. But that does not prevent one from accepting as true the separate partial explanations even if they be inconsistent.

Nor need we be prevented from carrying on the search for new explanations and new facts by this acceptance of the indifference to the facts of the explanations that are given of them. Practical demands for short-hand expression of facts, the value of the formulations in foreshadowing other events, and above all the instinct of curiosity, which demands that every event be related to some other, are sufficient to keep the process of interpretation and the consequent development of science and philosophy continuously progressing. Even if my assertion that explanation is always less real than the thing explained be accepted, it would have no influence upon the movement, for to be consistent I should have to admit my interpretation of the nature of thought and of investigation to be less real than the science itself. It is not only important that the elements of the datum be classified properly, that observations be correlated, but this activity could not be stopped if one tried. While explanations need not be regarded as ever giving the ultimately real, perhaps never the ultimate truth, they have an important function in the theoretical and practical life, a function that is sufficiently appreciated in common usage and discussion and need not be insisted upon here.

It must also be emphasized in justification of the felt

reality of explanations that it is very difficult, even in the simplest cases, to distinguish between the immediate datum and its explanation. The accepted explanations of perception indicate that merely receiving an object into awareness involves additions, involves comparisons similar in character to the explanations of the scientist. One does not even read the words as they stand on the printed page, but must interpret and add to them elements not seen, which from the context must be assumed to be present. At the same time misprints are suppressed and ideas are supplied in addition to the words or to take the place of words. All this is probably as much interpretation as inferring the presence of copper when a solution turns green, and it is only a more elaborate interpretation for the physicist to deduce the size of atoms from markings on a photographic plate, when X-rays have been passed through a given crystal before they fall upon that plate. But to assert that one cannot distinguish between the processes involved in ordinary perception, the processes that go to constitute the given, and the interpretations that are made of the given, need not be fatal to the view. Our statement that perception is made up of the effects of immediate stimuli, *plus* old memories and other additions, is itself a psychological interpretation, not an immediate datum. Each interpretation may be a datum for another interpretation; in fact, that seems essential if psychological or logical or philosophical investigations are to be carried out. The conclusion reached by the physicist is a datum for the logician who is seeking to understand thinking, in the same way that the immediate appreciation of matter is the datum for the physicist or chemist who reduces that matter to atoms or ions. The explanation of one moment becomes the datum of the next, but the datum is fundamentally real as datum rather than as explanation. The physicist will continue to think as he does whether his thinking does or does not accord with the interpretations of the process given by the logician, just as the scientist continues to see colors long after he has shown that they are only electro-magnetic waves. While the particular element



in experience is frequently at once datum and interpretation, it is quite easy to distinguish the function; as event we take one attitude towards it and as explanation quite another. It is always real and true as datum, while as explanation it may certainly be false and even unreal.

It is from these similarities between explanation and datum that the conclusion has been drawn on the one hand that the datum is itself the result of inference, and on the other that the explanation is immediately known. The one is the favorite statement of the idealist, the other of the realist. Strictly speaking both are wrong, since to reach the conclusion each introduces a slight difference in the meaning of the middle term or assumes a third proposition not explicitly present. The idealist takes it for granted that all explanation of the immediate stimulus must be by means of transformation into ideas. Since all must be interpreted in order to become known, all must be idea. The realist, on the contrary, assumes, as we have seen, that the datum is immediately known but, misled by the frequency of the realistic interpretation in popular speech, he assumes that it is known as things outside the datum, such as the atoms or ions of the chemist or the cells of the biologist. Each interpretation has justification in its place, but obviously it is true neither that all interpretation is by ideas, as the idealist understands the term, nor that the realistic interpretation of the datum is the datum itself.

Were there space, it would be interesting to work out the relations of the different forms of interpretation, the analogies that make them plausible, and the relative probability of each, but this would require writing a system of philosophy. The scope of the present paper is limited to the suggestion that the philosophers re-examine their premises and make them square with the fact they have overlooked, that the datum is not an assumption but the actual experience, immediate knowledge, or awareness, that this is the measure of the truth of all statements, general as well as particular, of axioms and general principles, as well as of immediate observations. To take this point of view does not change the

present systems except in so far as it makes it impossible to be dogmatic and makes it necessary to admit that many explanations may, nay must, be given of each phenomenon, and that the sole test of any theory or system is not the inconceivability of the opposite, or its deduction from premises which all have assumed to be true, but simply whether or not the theory or system offers a convenient way of interpreting or using the datum. Usefulness is the only measure of adequacy and adequacy is truth. This means again that any interpretation that is useful is justifiable, and does not prevent,—what we find in fact,—the acceptance of different theories that are at present irreconcilable. All this would not in the least change the actual character of science or philosophy, but it would make for less dogmatism, less acrimony in discussion, less conceited intolerance for opponents of one's own latest fad in opinion. Each might continue with full vigor upon his own experiments in interpretation without bestowing contempt upon his fellow worker whose standpoint reveals a slightly different vista.

## THE LIMITS OF THE PHYSICAL <sup>1</sup>

GRACE ANDRUS DE LAGUNA

It is a familiar reflection that the classic dichotomy of physical and psychical is the natural result of that vision of the universe which so stirred the generation of Descartes, and which has loomed so large upon the horizon of all philosophic thinkers down to our own day,—the mechanical theory of the universe. This vision had its birth in the discovery, or rather the analytical isolation by physical science, of classes of phenomena of universal occurrence, and the description of these in universal terms. The behavior of the falling body, of the evenly swinging pendulum, of the rebounding elastic ball, is the same wherever it is observed. And there seems to be no set of things in the world, no class of events, no nook or corner of the universe, which is beyond the long reach of physical science. Whatever exists or occurs anywhere apparently falls under one or more of these 'cases' or universals of physical science. It matters not whether this vision of the world takes the form of an intricate dance of atoms, or endless transformations of energy, or the interplay of centers of force; it is the same vision and its consequences are identical.

For, in every case, the harshness of the vision must be mitigated; and mitigated it always has been, and is, by the picturing of the psychic as a realm antithetical. The sole ideal limit to the physical has always been sought in its alleged opposite, the psychical. Those who have accepted the vision of a universal mechanism have traced alongside, or behind,

<sup>1</sup> This paper was read before the American Philosophical Association in New York, December, 1916. The writer gladly avails herself of the opportunity to publish it here as a mark of her esteem for Professor Creighton, though she regrets that circumstances made it impossible to prepare a special paper for this volume.



the physical universe another universe of the psychic to complete it. Those to whom the vision has been abhorrent, and who have stoutly defended to the last the little domain of living beings as a realm where physical uniformities are interrupted, have attributed the interruption to the presence and operation of a spiritual being. For even vital force is a vaguely conceived impulse, subconscious, but continuous with the conscious.

Among modern thinkers, the majority of whom, on epistemological grounds of one sort or another, deny ultimate ontological validity to the distinction, the dichotomy of physical and psychical still persists in spite of its altered status. No epistemological theory since Locke has accepted the ontological dualism of physical and psychical. No careful thinker today would consider the dualism as a possible basis for epistemological inquiry. Because, then, the epistemological theorist has been convinced that the distinction between physical and psychical is not ontologically ultimate, it has ceased seriously to trouble him. He has been too deeply interested in his own concerns to note that the dichotomy still persists, albeit with altered status. That it does persist is evidenced by the fact that neither Berkleyan nor absolute idealist nor even pragmatist has succeeded either in avoiding or in settling the classic controversy between interactionism and parallelism. At least, prominent representatives of all three schools have expressed themselves upon the issues of this controversy in terms which Descartes might have used, and have vigorously defended one or the other alternative. I would not assert that none of these philosophic systems is capable of affording a restatement of the problem in soluble form; I merely point out as significant that no attempt to do so has met with general acceptance even within its own school.

We are now in the midst of a new and widespread revolt against this persistent antithesis. But it is noteworthy that a majority of recent formulations of the mental or psychical have defined it either as that which is non-physical, or as a special class of the physical. In a word, we are still engaged

in the old enterprise of describing the mental in its relation to the physical. The very statement of the problem is based on the presumption that there is some systematic connection between the two classes of phenomena. We would not discuss the relation of physical and psychical if we did not assume that the distinction between them was significant and fruitful. But is this assumption well founded? What is its genesis and upon what considerations does it rest?

The classic formulation of the dualism of physical and psychical, we have observed, was consequent upon the conception of physical uniformities as universal. Just because the whole natural world was conceived as a physical world, determined throughout by mechanical laws, it became imperative to relate the mental to this world, and to treat this relationship as definitive. Hence, if we are to succeed in our revolt against this dualism, it would seem at least advisable to examine its historical and logical foundations.

Our present attitude toward the mechanical theory is marked by two apparently opposed tendencies. The first of these is a widespread and, I venture to think, growing conviction of the wrong-headedness of those who point to certain organic processes and functions, and say, "These are inexplicable in terms of physical science and therefore we must resort to some hypothesis different in kind, an entelechy, or soul." It has proved in the past a losing game to set specific limits of that sort to the possibilities of physical analysis. Besides, we are doubtful of the fruitfulness of explanation in terms of entelechies or souls. We may be ready to admit that the physical explanation of organic and nervous processes will involve modification and development of the concepts and theories of physical science itself, just as the extension of physical science to outlying phenomena in the past has involved reorganization within the science. But however great this development may prove to be, it will be a continuous development of the science, not leading in the direction of entelechies and souls. This is debatable ground, I am well aware, and perhaps this tendency to discredit the enterprise of the vitalist and the animist is less

widespread than my own predilections lead me to suppose.

However that may be, whether or not we believe that limits to the extent of physical science are to be found in certain specific processes of organisms, we do all of us believe, tacitly at least, that there are limits to the relevant and significant extension of physical description and explanation. Is the German army a physical entity, and will its future triumph or defeat be describable in terms of transformations of energy, or chemical recombinations? Or if such description is inadequate, can it be satisfactorily eked out with descriptions of psychical processes going on in the minds of officers and men? Again, is the commerce of the United States a physical phenomenon describable as a set of complex redistributions in time and space? Or are the economic laws which it exemplifies physical uniformities? Or if not, are they describable as psychological uniformities? In these, and a host of cases like these, we have passed beyond the legitimate limits of physical science. But it is not because we find here *exceptions* to physical laws, or a *breakdown* of physical continuity which we may attribute to the operation of a mental factor. No, the actual limit to the physical is not the psychical, but the essential irrelevancy of the physical categories. They are fundamentally and essentially inapplicable to a wide range of the things and events of common life and of science. Nor is this to be set down to the relatively undeveloped state of the sciences. It is outgrown, doctrinaire folly to suppose that the future development of such a science as economics, for example, will result in the exhibition of its phenomena and their laws as special cases of physical phenomena and physical laws. The development of economics is not in that direction, as we all know, nor is such an outcome an actual ideal.

But to recognize that the fruitful and significant application of the physical categories is thus limited is not enough. The ancient claim of the mechanical theory to universal sufficiency must be directly adjudicated. The source of what we have termed its fundamental and essential in-



applicability must be exhibited. For the vision is still compelling, even though we believe it illusory.

If we consider the events which are taking place in the world at any time, from a great historic event, such as the conflict going on in Europe, to our own recent national election, the spread and subsidence of infantile paralysis, or even your yesterday's conversation with a friend, all these events seem resolvable into physical occurrences. Even if it be maintained that many, or even all, of these events were the outcome of human purposes, nevertheless the purpose manifested itself, and could have manifested itself, only in physical occurrences. We can envisage them all, and conceive them as wholly describable down to the last detail, as redistributions of mass and transformations of energy. Moreover these occurrences, each and all, have their places in a vast interconnected complex of such processes, stretching out indefinitely in space and back indefinitely into the past. Unless we suppose the continuity to have been interrupted by the operation of psychic factors, we conceive each item of these events, such as the discharge of a projectile from a German trench or the dropping of a marked ballot into the ballot-box, to have been determined by antecedent physical conditions. We thus find ourselves involved in an apparent antinomy. On the one hand, it seems impossible to admit that mechanical explanation is ultimate or sufficient; on the other hand, it seems impossible to deny it. Perhaps it will help us to escape from this embarrassment, if we take for consideration some familiar and typical concrete example: the recent Democratic victory.

The particular event which occurred last November is resolvable into a vast mass of occurrences, such as the going to the respective polls of the voters all over the country, the marking of ballots, the subsequent fall of the ballots into the boxes, etc. And each of these occurrences may be similarly broken up, until, as an ideal limit, we may conceive that whole group of events which constituted the election and the Democratic victory as a multitude of redistributions of mass and transformations of energy. Every detail is ac-

counted for, nothing is omitted. In a like manner we may conceive other events of the same class, Democratic victories of former years, described in detail as groups of physical occurrences.

But if we now proceed to collate and compare these descriptions of the particular cases, in order to formulate a general description, we find that they present no characteristic identity. If they were not already given as belonging to the same class, we should never be led by our physical analysis to class them together. But this means that the phenomenon 'Democratic victory' is not a physical event.

Let us take a very simple analogy. On a piece of squared canvas, such as our great-grandmothers used for working samplers, one may embroider in cross-stitch all sorts of figures by filling in the squares in rows according to directions. One may, for instance, embroider a series of figures of dogs of different kinds and in different poses. Each such figure may be described as made up of designated squares in designated rows, and a mathematical formula may thus be given which will serve as a description, or as a rule for making such a figure. Similarly, any and every dog which it is possible to embroider may be so described. But if we were asked to give a formula for dog in general, which would serve as a general rule for embroidering dogs, we simply could not do it. The common property which all figures of dogs have is not to be found by such an analysis of structure, for it is constituted by relationships not expressible in terms of ordered and numbered squares.

Similarly, that which is common to all Democratic victories is not exhibited by an analysis of each such event into physical occurrences. Physical science does not yield adequate principles of classification for the articulation of our world.

We may then, in part at least, ascribe our contradictory attitudes towards the claims of the mechanical theory to the confused assumption that because any particular thing or event may be described in physical terms, the class to which it belongs may also be so described. In terms of logic,

the error lies in failing to recognize that what is true of all the members taken distributively is not necessarily true of the class as such.

But the further question at once arises, whether, if every particular thing or event in the world is completely describable in physical terms, we must not after all admit that the claims of the mechanical theory to supremacy are valid? If such an event as the recent Democratic victory is reducible to physical occurrences, is it not wholly determined by physical conditions? How can there be room for any further determination, *e. g.*, by social conditions? Must not any class not definable by physical principles be merely fictitious? Or, if we insist that both sorts of determination are equally valid, are we not committed to a parallelism more hopeless than the alleged psycho-physical relation?

Such a conclusion seems unavoidable if we accept the analysis of the particular event into physical occurrences as legitimate. This point now demands closer scrutiny. The Democratic victory of last November is resolvable, we said, into a multitude of physical occurrences. But when so resolved, it has lost all claim to be considered as a single event. It is not even a *complex* of physical occurrences, for the physical occurrences which constitute it have no physical connection with each other except *via* the whole universe. From the standpoint of physical science the selection of the scattered occurrences which constitute this event is perfectly arbitrary. It would be just as reasonable to group together the falling of snowflakes over the mound which marks Scott's grave in the Antarctic, the spring of a tiger in the jungles of Africa, and the purchase of a set of furs by the czarina of Russia, and call them an event. The slipping a dollar into the hand of a negro voter in Ohio and the marking of a ballot in California have no more physical connection than the former events. Physically speaking, your marking your ballot is far more directly determined by the temperature of the atmosphere than it is by the war in Europe, while its relation to the cerebral structure of Mr. Hughes or Mr. Wilson is altogether negligible. No, what we said before of



the class 'Democratic victory,' that it was not a physical phenomenon, we must now say of the particular event which took place in November. It, too, is no physical event, either simple or complex. And to our previous generalization, that physical science does not yield adequate principles of classification for the articulation of our world, we must now add that it does not yield adequate principles of individuation for the furnishing of our world. For physical science there are neither German armies nor Democratic victories, neither cabbages nor kings. To speak of such a thing or event as being mechanically determined is to talk nonsense.

We must not forget that the sciences, and above all the physical sciences, deal only with the abstract. The phenomena of science are universals, and it can take cognizance of the particular only in so far as the particular presents itself as a *case* of the universal phenomenon. The *concrete* particular event which we designate 'the dropping of your ballot into the ballot box' may be dealt with by physical science in so far as it is considered a case of a falling body, or a case of degradation of energy, but as *that* concrete particular, standing in an indefinite complex of relationships, it is not to be exhausted by physical analysis any more than it is by any other sort of scientific analysis. Similarly, what science can exhibit as determined is always the particular *case* of some universal phenomenon, the abstract particular, and not the concrete particular. As a 'falling body' the dropping of your ballot may be exhibited as an event determined by the masses and distance from each other of the piece of paper and the earth, but as a concrete, particular occurrence it cannot be exhibited as determined. The attempt to conceive it as determined, even ideally, involves a resort to the whole universe. One might as well resort to the Deity as an explanation. What must be conceived as determined by the universe is, for purposes of scientific description and explanation, *indeterminate*.

To sum up the argument: The traditional assumption that the limits to the physical are to be found exclusively in the psychical is not well founded. On the contrary, the limits

to the physical description and explanation of the things and events of common life and of science are set by the intelligible applicability of the concepts of physical science to such description, and of the laws of physical science to such explanation. This is not to be determined *a priori* by metaphysical considerations, but empirically. In general it may be said that phenomena are legitimately to be considered as physical only if the principles of their individuation and classification can be stated in physical terms.

The problem of the relation of physical and psychical is thus seen to be not a metaphysical problem, since there is no ontological dualism. Furthermore, we have no ground for the presumption that there is any systematic relationship of the one to the other such that the psychical is most fruitfully to be defined in its relation to the physical. The specific problem of the relation of the psychical to bodily behavior (the discussion of which cannot be undertaken in the limits of this paper) thus presents itself freed from metaphysical implications. The question which we have to ask (and it is a question whose importance I believe it would be difficult to exaggerate) is: Is the behavior of organisms, and in particular of organisms with nervous systems, a physical phenomenon? Are the characteristic phenomena which it presents, and the characteristic uniformities which these exhibit, capable of description in terms of physical science? More particularly, is it fruitful, or even possible, to describe in physical terms those characteristic modes of behavior which we by common consent associate with distinctively psychical processes, such as instinct, emotion, perception, and the rest? If it is not, if such uniformities of behavior are not describable as physical uniformities, then the mind-body relation is not properly speaking a *psycho-physical* relationship, and the problem of the relation of the psychical to the physical, like many another problem with which philosophy has long struggled, has no determinate solution.

## IS THE DUALISM OF MIND AND MATTER FINAL?

HENRY WILKES WRIGHT

IT is a common reproach flung at philosophers that they only renew from generation to generation the ancient controversy between idealism and materialism. And the candid philosopher is constrained to admit that appearances go far to justify the charge. The history of philosophy records a genuine progress in the solution of philosophical problems; there can be no doubt of that. This progress consists, however, in making each of the two conflicting views less one-sided and more adequate to the facts; it does not remove the deep-seated cause of their antagonism nor unite them in a lasting synthesis. The controversy is ever renewed, only on higher ground. Idealism forswears subjectivity, becomes 'objective,' and gains a precarious supremacy which it maintains more or less successfully through the vicissitudes of a century. But its inherent inadequacy provokes the inevitable reaction. Materialism, laid away with many an eloquent funeral oration, reappears upon the scene, very full of life and flushed with youthful enthusiasm. But now it appears in the guise of realism and through its deference to logical forms and processes pays tribute to the power and potency of thought.

It is my wish to show, first, that the opposition between materialism and idealism is rooted deep in human experience; second, that intelligence furnishes no category already formulated which is able to reconcile teleology and mechanism; and, third, that it is only through a study of man's social development and cultural achievements that we can hope to discover such a principle of synthesis.

Nothing that is experienced is alien to philosophy. The sole qualification which an object must possess in order to become subject-matter for philosophical investigation is that it be experienced. The experience in question is primar-



ily the universal experience of mankind; experiences peculiar to individuals are not excluded, to be sure, but they must bear some relation to human experience in general if they are to be even intelligible as material for study. If the student of philosophy assumes, in order to gain for his conclusions the kind of objectivity possessed by the principles of natural science, that everything real exists in mathematically determinable relations or that all behavior takes the form of response to external stimulation, he defeats the purpose of his philosophizing at the very beginning. For he begins with an assumption in regard to the subject-matter of his investigation that denies to the sciences of value due consideration; thus he pre-judges the whole philosophic problem at the start and condemns his own conclusions to one-sidedness and inadequacy. Such well-intended but ill-judged efforts to make philosophy 'objective' in the narrower sense commit the unforgivable sin, philosophically speaking, of accepting without criticism the principles and presuppositions of natural science, when it is the first and primary task of philosophy to subject these to analysis and criticism, to criticise in fact all the categories of experience.<sup>1</sup>

We begin, therefore, with experienced objects. These, we find, fall into two classes according to their characteristic mode of activity. To the first class belong all the objects whose activity is determined by other objects, is *externally* determined. This class includes the objects which make up the so-called physical world. The movement of each of these is circumscribed and delimited by the movement of all the other objects embraced in the system. Into a second class fall all those objects whose activity is *self-determined*, *i. e.*, determined by their own intrinsic potencies of development and self-expression. The "intrinsic potencies" of an object are the powers or capacities which are peculiar to it and render its behavior in some measure unique. Their character is, moreover, fully revealed only in actual expression and cannot be fully foreknown or predicted on the basis of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Professor Creighton, "The Copernican Revolution in Philosophy," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXII, 1913, p. 139.

previous performances of the object itself or any other agency. To this class belong living organisms, conscious individuals, free persons. Of course this difference in modes of determination does not divide the objects of experience into two entirely separate groups: many are subject to, or seem capable of, both kinds of determination. Thus the living individual as a physical object is subject to external determination, while physical agencies do, on their part, occasionally manifest unsuspected capacities for self-development and individuation (as must have been the case when life originated on this planet). But these complications are, comparatively speaking, superficial; the distinction between the mechanical and the teleological goes to the very root of our experience, cleaving it in twain and supplying an essential principle for dividing its objects.

As this distinction between external determination and self-determination underlies all other distinctions, the question next occurs, What is our original experience of each of these kinds of determination? Our original experience of external determination is given, it would appear, in our *efforts* to move our own bodies in spite of the resistance offered by objects external to them. And our original experience of self-determination seems to come in the *direction* which we, through the choosing of ends, give to our bodily movement. Now it is a remarkable fact that both of these root-experiences unite in the experience of voluntary action. Indeed, they do in their unity constitute this experience: voluntary action is the attainment, through external adjustment, of ends which as chosen express the intrinsic capacities of the agent. Since volition occupies this central position in our experience, it is not unreasonable to expect that a thorough-going analysis of its activity will bring us into touch with fundamental realities and thus open the way to a solution of the problem of the mental *versus* the material.

Let us therefore find out if we can what powers or capacities are regularly employed in voluntary action, what is their method of operation, and what are the conditions under which they work.

The first capacity that comes into play in the regular working of will is *ideation* (or free imagination). We commonly say that the power of will is first shown in the choice of an end. By this we mean that volition is able to imagine qualities or groups of qualities which are possible of realization. By identifying itself with these ideal qualities rather than with those which are actually present, the will projects the course of its own future activity. The ideal qualities in question, which become ends of future action and sources of future satisfaction, are themselves universals, inasmuch as they retain their characteristic meaning through changing experiences of choice, pursuit, and realization. They do, as a matter of fact, give expression to the self-identity of volition, maintained through a succession of changing acts.

The second factor essential to the working of will is the capacity for *effort*. As long as the end of action remains a mere possibility, it is opposed to the actual situation of the agent with its existing opportunities for self-realization. If the end is to be realized, the actual situation of the agent must be altered. Such readjustment of existing conditions requires effort, since objective reality resists readjustment or transformation. This resistance is encountered by the agent at one point, at several points simultaneously, or in succession at the same point or at several points. Hence the responding effort takes the form of movement having three parameters, or occurring in tri-dimensional space. These movements, since their character is objectively determined, are particular events occurring at certain times and (in relation to other movements) certain places; they are particular episodes in the life-history of individual organisms.

The *realization* of the ideal objective constitutes the third moment in the operation of volition. The chosen end is realized when the voluntary agent through his own effortful movement so alters existing conditions that the movements at his command are such as no longer to thwart or exclude, but rather to sustain, reinforce, and intensify the qualities he desires to experience. Thus the ideal end is brought into



dynamic continuity with the system of motor co-ordinations established by the agent; its distinctive qualities may be re-experienced at will; it thus becomes a permanent, a real, means of self-expression, and may constitute the starting-point for new activities.

We have discovered the two agencies which underlie the operation of volition and determine the character of its activity. The first is the subjective principle, the will itself, an originating source of self-directed activity. The second is the objective factor, having a reality equally underived and original, which limits the range of voluntary activity, sometimes checking and thwarting it and at others permitting its expression along chosen lines.

The two agencies, subjective and objective, whose existence is implied in all voluntary action, have been taken abstractly and, when thus treated, appear as purely formal principles. They do not, when thus understood in terms of their general character and distinctive function, furnish any explanation of the content or material of the existing world. It is not as formal principles, however, that these two agencies appear in our actual experience. There we always find them working with, or upon, a body of material. Our constructive imagination in the choice of ends unites qualities in varying combinations, but the qualities themselves are presupposed; we essay and effect different co-ordinations of movement, but the species of movement we co-ordinate are themselves given as original endowment. The philosophical thinker who is interested in explaining the facts of experience by a few fundamental principles is tempted to deduce or derive, if he can, the actual content of experience from its formal principles, but such attempts can be given the appearance of success only through a logical legerdemain which is as disastrous to the philosophy perpetrating it as it is sophistical in itself. Renouncing any such mistaken ambition, therefore, and accepting the content of experience as given along with its formal principles, we must indicate the material with which volition works in its choices and its actions.

The qualities that constitute the object-material with which our imagination works in the formulation of ends are given in a system of original interests. (These interests we usually think of as the outcome of actions performed before the advent of volition under the influence of instincts which have been developed in man or the lower animals by natural selection. Since, however, the relation of stimulus to response is itself a category of intelligence and all thinking is an expression of will, such explanations are subject to the reservation that they all presuppose will as the fundamental activity of human experience and hence cannot possibly reduce it to a negative or derivative status.) The interests in question are ends or objects of established value. They represent permanent prospects of satisfaction, each within the limits of its own content offering to volition a reliable opportunity for free self-expression. In idea they mean a variety of existing objects necessary for man's physical security and comfort, such as articles of food and drink, materials for clothing, places of shelter, sources of parental and sexual and social satisfaction. All these interests are combinations of qualities, the same qualities being components of different interests. The qualities (identical with the familiar sense-qualities, primary and secondary) are universals and, entering themselves into different combinations, bind the totality of interests into a system. Of course the interests under consideration are not to be understood as a limited number of ready-made and unchangeable alternatives to which the choice of human agents is limited. They do offer such ready-made alternatives in the way of guaranteed satisfaction, but they offer much more, inasmuch as they are severally capable of analysis and recombination to an unlimited extent, thus opening to the choice of the agent an indefinite number of new ends whose possibilities he may at will explore by action.

The qualities which enter as constituents into the original interests are easily distinguishable into a few main classes. First, and in the beginning most important because of the promise they hold forth of immediate satisfaction, are those

qualities which we, in the language of psychology, call tactual and organic. Such are,—to take random instances,—the taste and savour of nourishing food, the satiety which follows eating, the softness and warmth of firm, flexible clothing, the vital exaltation of victorious combat, the pressure of friendly hand-clasp, the thrill of sexual contact. The second class of qualities is kinæsthetic. Images and ideas of the movements required to approach with the body or follow with the eye the source of expected organic satisfaction are closely associated with the ideas of such satisfactions. In addition to these two classes of qualities there are two others which originally seem to serve as signs of their presence or guides to their realization: ideas of colors and of sounds. Color with its many hues and shades possesses interest primarily because it identifies objects as offering specific satisfactions and indicates the sequence of movements that must be made to approach them. Auditory images, particularly ideas of spoken words, are connected with the objects that appeal as ends of action and signify either their location or their value or both.

Turning now from imagined ends to the motor adjustments by which they are realized, we find that the movements possible to man as a voluntary agent fall into a few general classes. There are first the movements of the whole body, trunk and limbs, as it changes its position relative to other objects, and grasps, holds, or otherwise manipulates or moves them. In a second class are the movements involved in adjusting the sensory apparatus, primarily that of sight and hearing. Stationary objects are fixated and surveyed, moving objects are followed, their changes being compensated by readjustments of the visual mechanism. Into a third class fall the movements of the vocal apparatus in speech, by which the human individual communicates to others his experiences of pursuit and satisfaction and by this means influences their behavior.

The fact that a system of interests and a capacity for movements such as have just been described are given along with the power of volition itself has important implications



which must now be made clear. The existence of the aforesaid interests and capacity for movement implies the existence along with volition of a world of sense-objects and a society of free agents.

The original interests from which man selects his ends of action are at once plans of movement and promises of satisfaction. Since all movements are of the tri-dimensional order, and identical qualities are present in different complexes, it is evident that all movements fall within one space and all qualities are included within one teleological system. Hence an extended world containing a multiplicity of objects of different kinds may be taken for a pre-condition of any voluntary action whatsoever. But the world of sense-objects as actually perceived depends for its character and arrangement upon the motor adjustments of the perceiving individual. Such motor adjustment, usually of the visual apparatus of the agent, signifies the presence of expected qualities (of color, form, figure, etc.) and in some measure locates the object. The results of such visual adjustment are confirmed by bodily movements towards or away from perceived objects, accompanied by a visual readjustment to compensate for shifting of objects in altering perspective. The arrangement of objects in the sense-world depends upon the individual point-of-view and changes with every change of individual position. The order of these changes is noted and remembered by the individual, is compared with the experiences of others who themselves figure in the changing panorama and with whom the individual is in constant communication, and thus a system of spatial relations is projected whose objectivity is generally acknowledged.

The voluntary agent is not merely capable of movement under the limitations imposed by objective reality, he is also capable of determining his own activity by a free choice among ends. These ends are, as we have seen, universals; they are possible modes of activity which promise to yield their specific satisfactions whenever engaged in. They retain their value and significance as long as the voluntary agent retains his identity; their universality is in fact an

expression of the identity of the voluntary agent as a self-determining center or source of activity. Now the recognition by a number of individuals of the same system of permanent values would constitute them a society of free persons. It has been pointed out that the interests of which the human individual finds himself possessed imply the existence of other individuals and that any action on his part in fulfillment of these interests involves the perception of such others as objects in the physical world. The original interests, moreover, come to the human agent in association with words. Such articulate sounds serve to symbolize the identical meaning possessed by a number of particular objects or experiences and their use for this purpose would be impossible apart from the ability to appreciate permanent meanings and values. But the human individual is not left to manufacture his own stock of words to serve as signs of universals; he receives them ready-made as a part of his social heredity. Such a system of verbal symbols as the human individual finds in existence and use implies the existence of a number of others recognizing identical meanings and pursuing common ends. The original conditions of action, therefore, constitute the human individual a member of a society of free agents; his will is a social will from the start.

Volition thus proves to be the key to the structure of the experienced world; an analysis of its activity brings to light the determining factors of human experience. The first of these real agencies is the human will itself, endowed with the power of directing its own activity and of effort in extending the range of its free choice. The second is objective reality, which limits and circumscribes the action of the will. The material of human choice is given, furthermore, as a variety of sensory qualities, and the components of human action as a system of motor co-ordinations. Volition, in so far as we have experience of its powers, operates through a multitude of individual wills; these wills, moreover, act in a common world of sense-objects and are in verbal communication with each other. The aim of will is its own development

as a self-determining agency; it seeks to enlarge the scope of its own free activity by increasing the number and variety of objects which it may at choice experience. The opportunities for choice among possible ends of pursuit are practically limitless. But such unlimited choice among ideal possibilities does not constitute real self-expression for will, since ideas are realized only when brought into harmony with the motor adjustments of human individuals. Volition seeks to increase the variety of objects whose reality is thus open to its experiencing; it does this in actual practice by endeavoring through the effort of motor adjustment to realize those ends which, when they are realized, open to the choice of the agent the richest content of qualities, the most diverse detail of activities.

Have we gained from our analysis of experience in terms of will any hint of a solution for the problem of the dualism of mind and matter? Our results thus far seem rather to confirm than to remove the opposition in question. Experience proves to have its source in the action of two antagonistic principles or agencies, the subjective principle being a self-determining activity and the objective factor setting limits to its free play. The world of objects as we know it is a joint product of these two agencies. The objective factor supplies none of the qualities which enter into its constitution unless, indeed, we suppose that the system of interests, given along with volition and containing all the qualities predicated of existence, comes originally from objective reality.<sup>1</sup> Objective reality does, however, determine the order and arrangement which these qualities have in the existing world. It does this through the control which it exercises over the action of voluntary agents, performed under the guidance of ideas adopted as ends. When the attempted motor adjustments are hindered or prevented, the idea which governs the action as a working hypothesis is proved false and its hypothetical object non-existent. When, on the contrary, the action which is expected to revive and

<sup>1</sup> This subject is more fully discussed by the writer in an article, "The Principles of Voluntarism," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXIV, 1915, p. 297.



intensify the chosen qualities is permitted to proceed unhindered to its intended outcome, the idea is (as we say) *realized*; its constituent qualities are given objectivity. Since rational will and objective reality thus co-operate in the production of the experienced world, it is in a certain sense itself a synthesis of mind and matter. But how does it unite self-determination and externality? Do we find any relation established among its objects which stands as a genuine reconciliation of teleology and mechanism? At this juncture it will be well to remind ourselves that the question of a synthetic principle capable of reconciling the categories of teleology and mechanism is an intellectual one. Now thought is itself an expression of will; hence its activity is subject to explanation in terms of the voluntaristic principles just formulated. The bearing of these principles upon the mind-matter dualism can be fully understood only if we first determine the part played by thought in the comprehensive activity of volition and also consider how the opposing categories of teleology and mechanism have come to conscious recognition in the course of intellectual development.

The power of ideation has been shown to be a necessary factor in volition, its function being freely to imagine objects as ends of choice and pursuit. The faculty of thought is a development of this original capacity for ideation; as a specialized form of voluntary action, it has its characteristic aim and distinctive technique. The aim of thought is to discover truth, that is, to formulate in an ideal system all objects that can be realized. As an authentic expression of will it exhibits, under its own distinctive form, the three essential moments of ideation, effort, and realization. Since the thought-object or idea is primarily an end of action, its validity is tested by the results of action.<sup>1</sup> The true idea is the idea that can by effortful movement be brought into such dynamic continuity with the established motor adjustments of the agent that it can be re-experienced at

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. W. Wright, "Practical Success as a Criterion of Truth," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXII, 1913, p. 606.

will and made the starting-point for new courses of action.

In perception the distinctive character of the cognitive or intellectual first declares itself. The perceived object is an end of action, to be sure; better, it is a plan of action involving an anticipation of motor adjustment and a promise of satisfaction. Such a perception is, moreover, verified through action and by the results of action. But the movements by which the perception is verified are not ordinarily those which are anticipated in its meaning, nor are its qualities the results desired. The movements represented in the perception are primarily those of the whole body in appropriating the object, while the satisfactions are those expected when it is put to the use for which it is intended. The movements instantly evoked by the initial interpretation, however, are adjustments of the sensory apparatus (usually of sight and hearing), suited to prove the existence of qualities in the object (for the most part, colors and sounds) whose presence guarantees, in advance of more extensive movement, that the results desired will follow when these latter movements are made. The perception *qua* perception gains objectivity when the sensory adjustment which it prompts is permitted to proceed unhindered and intelligence is stimulated thereby to fill out and complete the interpretation which evoked it. The world of perception is a world of material objects externally related to one another and to the body of the percipient. To be sure, these physical objects are centers of characteristic qualities themselves universal; many different objects possess the same qualities; therefore objects may be classified according to their kind in a teleological system. But this feature of the sense-world is altogether over-shadowed by the fact that its objects owe their standing and existence to the widely differing motor adjustments of different individuals and are hence particular things externally juxtaposed.

But thought is not content with interpreting the successive situations in which different individuals find themselves with a view to possible action; it endeavors to extract the

essential significance of the passing experiences of all individuals and give to the meaning thus discovered and defined, valid as it is for all human agents, permanent expression through the medium of language. By means of the concept, thought advances toward the attainment of its aim of formulating in an ideal system all objects that can be realized. The concept is an identification of objects that play a similar part in all human conduct, this identical function being symbolized by a word. The relations which constitute the meaning of such concepts are of two kinds, because the functions which objects discharge in voluntary action are of two main sorts. Such objects are either links or steps in sequences of movement or else they are sources of satisfaction. Conceptual objects are therefore possessed either of spatial attributes, and thus are subject to mechanical causation, or of the properties of freedom and self-development. The meaning of most familiar concepts is constituted by both these types of relation; they are at once extended objects having location, size, shape, etc., depending in their construction and employment upon definite kinds of motor adjustment, and also objects of value having many possibilities of use and promising a variety of satisfactions. Terms which thus symbolize the permanent significance, mechanical or teleological, of the changing objects of experience are themselves combined according to their essential relations into propositions and propositions are woven into larger bodies of discourse. Such systems of discourse, developed by individual thought and general discussion, when freed from inner contradiction and tested by common human experience, stand as the accepted truth. When a statement of supposed fact conforms to, or is implied in, this body of verified knowledge, it is judged true; but when it contradicts established propositions, it is judged false and its object unreal.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this and the foregoing paragraph quotations are made from the writer's article, "The Object of Perception *versus* the Object of Thought," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. XIII, 1916, p. 437.



Conceptual thought cannot be freely exercised until industrial and political development have proceeded far enough to make possible an orderly social life in which individuals are free to exchange ideas and to engage in constant and systematic discussion of their experiences. When these conditions were fulfilled, it is not strange that human thought should have turned its attention away from the outer world of sense-objects to the inner realm of purpose and ideal, and devoted itself to an investigation of the possibilities of satisfaction offered by the different ends of human action. Objects were then classified into a system in accordance with the kind or degree of satisfaction they promised and thus constituted a realm of ends or ideals. The formulation of such a system of values was tantamount to the discovery of a new world, different from and in many ways contrasting with the natural. This ideal or spiritual realm was found to have its own structure and organization: ends could be classified in accordance with their generality and all subsumed under one, the *summum genus*; they could also be organized according to degree of comprehensiveness, all being finally included within one absolute and all-comprehensive good.<sup>1</sup>

If it is possible to conceive of objects altogether in terms of the variety of satisfactions which they offer, it is also possible to conceive of them exclusively in terms of their mechanical conditions. This modern physical science has done; it has eliminated all secondary qualities from the actual world and reduced its phenomena to terms of mass and motion. Hence the two worlds, that of value and that of mechanism, confront one another in the systematic thought of the present: they are not merely different, they are opposed; they are not merely antagonistic, they seem out of all conceivable relation to one another. Yet both formulations are valid because, as we have seen, the categories on which both are based, of teleology and mechanism, are grounded in the nature of volition, which is fundamental to human experience

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. W. Wright, *Faith Justified by Progress*, New York, 1916, Lecture IV, "The Supernatural Life."

and conditions the existence of thought itself as a form of voluntary activity. Despite the apparent finality of this dualism, our thought chafes under it, and it is the special task of present-day philosophy to find some principle comprehensive enough to reconcile these two orders of movement and choice, necessity and freedom, matter and spirit.

The question of transcending the dualism of mind and matter now recurs in a somewhat different form: Does not our experience of voluntary activity supply such a synthesis as we require? Is not the realization of the end itself a reconciliation of free choice and effortful movement? More specifically, does not the experience of realization establish a relation of adjustment between free choice and mechanical determination, and does this relation not furnish us with the reconciling category which we seek? Evidently this relation is not as obvious as those which gain expression in mechanism and teleology or it would have influenced human thought as decisively as the other two. But, however obscure, it is worth investigating, for in it lies the only apparent hope of a solution for the crucial philosophical problem.

An idea is realized, according to the account already given, when the movements at the command of the agent are such as to revive and reinforce rather than to exclude its constituent qualities. Now the movements at the command of the agent are principally the movements of his own body, muscular co-ordinations established by heredity or practice and performed without effort or attention. An idea realized is an idea brought into existence, and an existing object is an object that the agent sees or hears, handles or manipulates, describes to himself or otherwise reacts to. What difference does it make to an ideal quality thus to be brought into harmony with the motor adjustment of the human organism? It means, in the first place, that the qualities in question may be re-experienced by the agent whenever he chooses to repeat the movements necessary to their revival. It means, in the second place, that the object may also be experienced by all other individuals who, imagining its character from the speech and expression of the agent, watch

and imitate the movements by which he has realized it. For an end to be realized signifies, therefore, that it ceases to be the momentary choice of an individual will and becomes the potential property of all individual wills, a permanent source of social satisfaction. The human organism is the medium or instrument through which ends are thus socialized. Influenced by convention, we often think of human bodies as strictly individual possessions, expressing individuality in its most private and exclusive character. This is far from the truth; it is his body with its inherited mechanisms that allies the individual with his race or species. Individuality finds expression in those purposes and preferences which are shaped and formulated by the free imagination of the individual and which are original with and distinctive of him. His body is the instrument by which he converts these original purposes into sources of social satisfaction. It appears, then, that the relation brought to light in the realization of an end is that of *association*, since the objects experienced are determined neither by the free choice of an individual will nor by the constraint of objective reality but by the conditions of social life and activity.

The conclusion to which we come is that the association of individual wills who pursue correlative ends under the same objective limitations is the comprehensive relationship which reconciles mechanism and teleology. The experience of realizing an end is an experience both of movement and of choice; with the object once in his possession the agent makes the bodily adjustments which are necessary to reinforce those of its qualities which he may choose to experience. But necessity and freedom are not simply combined in an external way in realization; they are both transformed through integration in a higher unity. The experience of movement is no longer the experience of overcoming resistance, of expending effort; it takes the form of kinæsthetic qualities which have meaning because they identify themselves with other actions of the agent and his fellows. This is true of the movements of the body and sensory apparatus by which we maintain our positions and adjust ourselves to



one another in the common world; it is also true of those of the speech-mechanism, which, as an instrument of communication, has always a social reference. It has been generally recognized that kinæsthetic qualities perform an important office in imparting objectivity to the other qualities with which they are interwoven; this is because they give these latter qualities, whose experience is desired, a definite place in the common world of human occupations and intercourse. Nor is the freedom which we exercise in the enjoyment or use of the object realized identical with the freedom we enjoy when we imagine its various qualities. The ability to follow the play of imagination in projecting objects for possible realization is freedom in the more restricted and proper sense; its activity has, however, a certain arbitrariness because subject solely to the individual will. But the freedom which we exercise in choosing this or that quality or character of the existing object for our use or enjoyment is limited by the fact that all these qualities have been brought into definite relations with the determinate motor adjustments of a human organism. The choice of the individual is no longer determined solely by his own will and the character of his own experience; it is determined by the general will of mankind and the conditions of social life.

The social significance of the experience of realization is frequently obscured by the fact that the experience in question is exemplified by the attainment of some particular desire. Not that the social implication is absent in this case; qualities which, when imagined as desirable, express the will of a single individual become in the process of realization associated with movements which take place in the world of common perception and which can be imitated and employed by others to induce an experience of the same character. But this social reference becomes much plainer in the realization of a comprehensive purpose whose attainment involves the employment of tools and the control of natural forces and whose satisfactions extend over a considerable period of time. Consider, as an example, the purpose to grow a crop of grain for the winter's food-supply.

The successive movements by which the end is realized, depending upon the use of tools and following uniform sequences of nature, become generalized community practices, established arts, and, because of the opportunities they offer for co-operation, independent sources of satisfaction. And the satisfactions which these movements bring about are enjoyed by several individuals in association and imply an orderly community life with its many and varied possibilities of intercourse, companionship, and play around the fireside hearth or on the village common. The social character of our experience of reality is fully revealed, however, only in the achievement of the three universal ends sought by volition in its specialized capacities of thought and action and feeling, viz., Truth and Power and Beauty. Each of these ends is being progressively realized: the system of verifiable ideas is being enlarged and co-ordinated; more methods of operation are being devised and machines invented; new arrangements of form and color and tone are being effected which stimulate the imagination and arouse the feeling of beauty. In each case, the movements involved are themselves instruments of association: language of communication, industrial technique of co-operation, æsthetic contemplation of fellow-feeling. And these ends have all of them in their realization the same social implication of the establishment of a society of free persons united by mutual understanding, co-operation, and sympathy in the experience of a common world of intelligible objects, manageable forces, and enjoyable harmonies of sight and of sound.

If these conclusions are warranted, philosophy has erred when, influenced by the definitive opposition of mechanism and teleology, it has conceived reality either as a kinetic system or as a hierarchy of ends, rather than as a social life. Our social experience presents a reality more concrete, if less definite, richer and more varied, if less easily formulated; surely there is no more promising field for philosophical investigation than that of man's developing social life, his progressive cultural achievements.

## THE REVOLT AGAINST DUALISM <sup>1</sup>

ALFRED H. JONES

"It is a commonplace of our philosophical tradition that Kant marks a turning point in the history of modern thought. The Kantian and post-Kantian systems are forces with which we have to reckon at the present day, . . . while the earlier theories of the modern period, though not lacking in suggestion, are generally taken to represent standpoints and methods which have been definitely transcended. . . . Kant himself was so impressed with the importance of the new principle which he introduced into philosophy that he spoke of it as a revolution comparable to that which Copernicus had brought about in astronomy. And, in spite of occasional dissenting voices, this verdict seems to have been generally accepted, not only by his immediate successors, but also by philosophers of the present day. . . . Kant's own statement of the nature of the change which he had brought about is well known. Whereas previous philosophy had proceeded on the assumption that the mind is determined in the process of knowledge by an object external to itself, his philosophy is the proof that the object must conform to the conditions prescribed by the knowing mind. Thus the centre of the philosophical universe is changed from the object to the knowing subject: we have to recognize that the understanding gives laws to nature. Now, if Kant is himself the final authority regarding the meaning of his philosophy, and if this statement is to be taken literally as complete and final, then one would be justified in feeling that his new principle is of questionable validity. . . . The 'mind' in the sense of the older philosophy, has no advantage as a

<sup>1</sup> This essay, so far as it deals with the philosophy of Thomas Reid, is similar to the writer's article entitled, "The Problem of Objectivity," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXV, 1916, p. 778.



principle of explanation over the merely external object. Mere subjectivism is no advance on mere objectivism: they rest on the same fundamental assumptions and have so much in common that their differences are almost negligible. . . . Kant begins clearly enough with the ordinary dualism, which was common to both the earlier schools of modern philosophy; and at first he appears to be bringing together in a merely mechanical way elements derived from these historical sources. . . . But, as one can see through the perspective afforded by the intervening time, the significance of the Critical philosophy is not dependent upon its success in carrying out this program, but is due to the fact that the logic of its procedure transformed the standpoint from which this problem had been formulated, and thus revealed that the problem itself was not a genuine one. . . . His real method of procedure, . . . *i. e.*, the procedure by means of which he obtained fruitful results, *assumes* knowledge and its organization, and proceeds by reflective analysis to bring to light the assumptions which are involved in it as constructive principles. . . . The critical method, then, does not attempt to construct knowledge or to prove its existence, but to formulate and systematize its necessary assumptions."

Such, in the clear language of Professor Creighton,<sup>1</sup> was the significant revolution wrought by Kant in modern philosophical thought. It was not, however, until Hegel that the revolt thus falteringly initiated against dualism attained full consciousness of itself. It was Hegel's proud boast that he 'broke through to reality;' that, premising a ready and authentic intercourse with things, he expended the labor of his thought wholly on the analysis of the real and the principles by which we apprehend it. Philosophy, so considered, is a 'criticism of categories.' Shunning the ancient ambition to leap from the possessed to a severed and foreign reality, philosophers of this type limit the excursions of their thought to the world of present proprietorship; their universe is a single-chambered affair. In curious contrast stands the pro-

<sup>1</sup> "The Copernican Revolution in Philosophy," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXII, 1913, pp. 133-136.

cedure of British metaphysicians, committed by dualistic premises to the insoluble problem of unifying a world regarded, in its inmost nature, as severed and split. Beginning with the assumption that matter is an absolute, English thinkers early encountered the problem of error, for real things do appear falsely. To solve this difficulty, they postulated a second absolute, the mind, in the dark recesses of which vagrant illusions might find shelter and a home. Thus arose the classic doctrine of the twin store-houses, in one or the other of which the entire content of experience must lie. But this radical separation, while settling one problem, gave rise to another no less urgent and perplexing. "Is the reality thus locked and barred outside of mind perceivable," it was asked, "and if so, how is this perception possible?" To this inquiry there was no satisfactory answer. Thus the content of the external store-house was gradually shifted to the mind, and the real became hypothetical, a mere ghost of its former self. "The great advantage of . . . [the dualistic] theory," remark the Platform Realists, "is that it . . . accounts for error and illusion; the disadvantage of it is that it appears to account for nothing else."<sup>1</sup>

The reasoning just sketched reveals at once the achievement and failure of British metaphysics. To attain constructive significance, this philosophy must reject mind and matter as substances and conceive them as reciprocal functions of a self-determining experience. It can hardly fail to strike one as strange that a program so natural and promising as this has, in the entire history of philosophy in English, been tried but twice, first by Thomas Reid, second by the new realists. Of the terms of traditional dualism, Reid challenged and re-interpreted only the doctrine of mind. Aroused from the dogmatic acceptance of the Berkeleian theory by its sceptical issue in the philosophy of Hume, Reid examined the foundations of the classic structure, and discovered, not a little to his surprise, that it "leans with its whole weight upon a hypothesis, which is ancient indeed, and hath been

<sup>1</sup> *The New Realism*, pp. 4f.

very generally received by philosophers, but of which I could find no solid proof. The hypothesis I mean, is, That nothing is perceived but what is in the mind which perceives it: That we do not really perceive things that are external, but only certain images and pictures of them imprinted upon the mind. . . . If this be true, . . . I cannot, from their existence, infer the existence of anything else.”<sup>1</sup>

Reid's polemic was directed not against all conceptions of ideas, but solely against the notion of them as exclusive objects or termini of knowledge, motes and beams in the eye of the subject.<sup>2</sup> Good dogmatist that he was, Reid holds it self-evident that knowledge is principally engaged, not with its own ideas, but with objects. “When we see the sun or moon, we have no doubt that the very objects which we immediately see are very far distant from us, and from one another.”<sup>3</sup> “A second reflection . . . is—that the authors who have treated of ideas, have generally taken their existence for granted, as a thing that could not be called in question; and such arguments as they have mentioned incidentally, in order to prove it, seem too weak to support the conclusion.” Only two arguments, he finds, have been advanced in defense of the conception. The first, succinctly stated by Clarke, sets forth that “The soul, without being present to the images perceived, could not possibly perceive them. A living substance can only there perceive, where it is present.”<sup>4</sup> Of such reasoning Reid makes short work, showing that whatever cogency it possesses is due to the unacknowledged premise that mind is quasi-material. The

<sup>1</sup> *The Works of Thomas Reid*, edited by Sir W. Hamilton, Vol. I, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> “If by ideas are meant only the acts or operations of our minds in perceiving, remembering, or imagining objects, I am,” he affirms, “far from calling in question the existence of those acts.” *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 298. Cf. James's statement: “Whoever blots out the notion of consciousness from his list of first principles must still provide in some way for that function's being carried on.” *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> All quotations, unless otherwise specified, are from the excellent summary which constitutes the fourteenth chapter of the second of the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*; *Works*, Vol. I, pp. 298–306.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted by Reid, *ibid.*, p. 300.



second and weightier argument arises from the fact of the variability of perception and illusion. "The table . . .," Hume remarked, "seems to diminish as we remove farther from it: but the real table . . . suffers no alteration. It was, therefore, nothing but its image which was present to the mind."<sup>1</sup> To this, the true ground of all subjectivism, Reid has no adequate or convincing reply. He merely affirms, partly on the right track, that there is no reason why real objects, under different conditions of perception, should not array themselves in different garments; and further reminds us that the forms and successions of appearances are as predictable as those of real things themselves—a fact, he believes, consonant only with the hypothesis of realism.<sup>2</sup> "Thus," he concludes, "I have considered every argument I have found advanced to prove the existence of ideas . . . in the mind; and, if no better arguments can be found, I cannot help thinking that the whole history of philosophy has never furnished an instance of an opinion so unanimously entertained by philosophers upon so slight grounds."

Reid's remaining criticisms have a common aim, to reduce the theory of ideas to an absurdity. "If ideas be not a mere fiction, they must be, of all objects of human knowledge, the things we have best access to know . . . ; yet there is nothing about which men differ so much." He observes further that "ideas do not make any of the operations of the mind to be better understood, although it was probably with that view that they have been first invented. . . . We are at a loss to know how we perceive distant objects; how we remember things past; how we imagine things that have no existence. . . . They are all by means of ideas reduced to one operation—to a kind of feeling, or immediate perception

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Reid, *Works*, Vol. I, p. 302.

<sup>2</sup> "Shall we say," he inquires, "that a false supposition, invented by the rude vulgar, has been so lucky in solving an infinite number of phenomena of nature? This, surely, would be a greater prodigy than philosophy ever exhibited: add to this, that, upon the contrary hypothesis, . . . no account can be given of any of these appearances, nor any physical cause assigned why a visible object should, in any one case, have one apparent figure and magnitude rather than another."

of things present and in contact with the percipient; and feeling is an operation so familiar that we think it needs no explication, but may serve to explain other operations. But this feeling, or immediate perception, is as difficult to comprehend as the things which we pretend to explain by it." Finally, it is in consequence of this doctrine that subjectivists feel it "necessary to prove, by philosophical arguments, the existence of material objects. And who does not see that philosophy must make a very ridiculous figure in the eyes of sensible men, while it is employed in mustering up metaphysical arguments, to prove that there is a sun and a moon, an earth and a sea? . . . However [he concludes], as these paradoxes have, with great acuteness and ingenuity, been deduced by just reasoning from the theory of ideas, they must at last bring this advantage, that positions . . . so contrary to the decisions of all our intellectual powers, will open men's eyes, and break the force of the prejudice which hath held them entangled in that theory."

There is in these statements much that is ill-considered and utterly dogmatic; but we should not, on that account, fail to observe that they set forth, for the first time, in opposition to British dualism, the outlines of a doctrine of immediate perception of reality. It is the more to be regretted, therefore, that Reid failed to sustain and develop this suggestive insight. That mind was a substance or agent, and that sensation and feeling formed the material of such substances, he never questioned. "By the mind of a man," he writes, "we understand that in him which thinks, remembers, reasons, wills." Sensation, he continues, "hath no object distinct from the act itself"; "the feeling and the thing felt are one and the same."<sup>1</sup> Perception, memory, and imagination, according to Reid, reveal to us objects independent of ourselves; but sensation and feeling have no content save their own character and state. It was at these points, accordingly, that the germs of subjectivism entered Reid's system, and, after the manner of their kind, multiplied and spread, until they infected most of it. By degrees, the secondary and

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, pp. 220, 229, 230, respectively.

then the primary qualities contracted the ailment, and became, in effect, mere states of mind. The result is an inconsequential doctrine of perception for which Reid, owing to the misdirected efforts of his expositors, is mainly known: the theory that sensations are but signs or signals which initiate in the mind a 'conception' of objects and an irresistible belief in their existence. According to this interpretation, what assures us of reality is no direct seizure of it, but a common-sense conviction of its existence, supposed for theoretical as for practical purposes to be authoritative and ultimate.

This summary suffices to exhibit the grave manner in which Reid's house is divided against itself. Affirming, in opposition to Berkeley and Hume, a suggestive doctrine of immediate perception, this author, determined by subjective premises, insensibly drifted back, in the constructive movement of his thought, into the very theory of ideas which he proposed to controvert. Nor was the breach thus left open satisfactorily closed by any succeeding philosopher of the Scottish School. Influenced by Hamilton, a man of prodigious learning but of little genius, these philosophers rejected Reid's suggestion of monistic realism, following instead the familiar theory of representative perception. Not until the last decade, and then outside of Scotland, and without historical relation to Reid, has there been a fresh attempt to formulate the sole original feature of Scotch metaphysics. This formulation has been undertaken by the new realists.

The new realism, particularly that of Professor Perry, in its relation to dualism, consists in developing the consequences of a single postulate, viz., that the content of experience is 'neutral' in character. Is the 'psychical' an aspect or relation of that which is likewise 'physical,' or are they separate and unique existences? <sup>1</sup> Modern realism returns to the first part of this question an affirmative, to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Topic for Discussion at the 1916 Meeting of the American Philosophical Association," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. XIII, 1916, pp. 573f.



the second part, a negative reply. "In so far as I divide them into elements," writes Professor Perry, "the contents of my mind exhibit *no* generic character. . . . It is only with respect to their grouping and interrelations that the elements of mental content exhibit any peculiarity." "The same elements," viz., sensible qualities and logical categories, "compose both mind and body," so that, "instead of conceiving reality as divided absolutely between two impenetrable spheres, we may conceive it as a field of interpenetrating relationships, among which those described by physics and psychology are the most familiar and typical, and those described by logic the most simple and universal." Mars, in brief, is 'mental' in "relation to my perceiving activity, . . . my memories, plans, feelings, etc."; 'physical' "by virtue of its volume, and its distance from the sun."<sup>1</sup> "There must be," exclaims a vigorous critic of this doctrine,<sup>2</sup> "more than an external correspondence between the 'idea' and the object. The idea . . . is the interpretation of the object, the revelation of its nature. This revelation finds illustration in the fact that cognitive experience may always be read both in internal and external terms; as the ideas and judgments of a mind, and as the determinations of real things. In its concreteness, it is both." In every monistic metaphysics the doctrine of neutral elements, or its equivalent, is manifest.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, pp. 277, 311, 312.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Creighton, "The Determination of the Real," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXI, 1912, p. 314.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Professor Dewey, "The Concept of the Neutral in Recent Epistemology," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. XIV, 1917, p. 161. Professor Dewey points out that the neutral may be conceived in either of two senses and recommends greater explicitness in the use of the term. "In one sense to call anything neutral means neutral in a *specified respect or reference*; that is, with respect to the application of a particular set of alternatives. . . . To say, for example, that certain things are neutral with respect to the distinction of mental and material would be to say that there are things such that intelligent discussion of them is not forwarded by applying to them, without further specification, the distinctions marked out by the terms 'mental—material.' What is asserted is the irrelevancy of a certain type of distinction. . . .

This central conception has two evident applications. First, it denies that mind and ideas are substantial entities. Consciousness, it affirms, is an attribute or relation. Though general and ambiguous in form, this dictum has in practice a definite and specific meaning, viz., that the content of perception is a datum that is, or may be, objective. This is the essence of monistic metaphysics. Introduce any cleft between the material known and that which exists,—let the first be of one order and the second of another,—and the face of things is veiled from us forever. All that an hypothesis of immediate perception need maintain, all that its formulæ can possibly mean, is that the content of knowledge belongs exclusively neither to the world of ideas nor to that of things. It is precisely to make intelligible such dual citizenship as this that members of the current school define mind as a function or relation. The content of consciousness, considered as substance, must partake exclusively of the nature of that substance, but the datum of thought, regarded as relation, is not necessarily of this single, one-dimensional character. On the relational view, that which in virtue of one connection is known may in virtue of another exist. By the simple device of substituting a dualism of relations for a dualism of worlds the new realist exhibits reality as knowable.

The second application of the doctrine concerns the notion of reality. It will be recalled that Reid, apart from the negation of ideas, was a naïve, a common-sense realist. Like all metaphysicians influenced solely by English tradition, he accepted without question, as warranted by the senses, the notion that matter is primordial and unique, one of two charter members in the corporation of the universe. In opposition to this time-honored belief, the members of the new school assume that, save for a difference of relation, reality and true knowledge are identical. They maintain with

In contrast with this conceivable meaning of the term neutral, which might be called the logical, stands another which might be called the metaphysical or ontological, namely, that there is a certain sort of stuff which is, intrinsically, neutral." The word neutral is here used only in the first of these senses. No value, I believe, attaches to the second usage.

Berkeley that existence is akin to thought; with Reid that it is no mere state of mind. Berkeleianism robbed of substantial mind and idea, naïve realism stripped of matter as absolute, dualism shorn of both additions, yield alike the simple construction of the new realism. To view the manifold content of experience as unsupported and unexplained by any transcendent factor is to arrive at the central insight of the current doctrine.

It is accordingly only in a specific and defined sense that reality is independent of, or external to, the process by which it is perceived. It stands outside the perceiving relation in the circumstance that it is regarded as real solely in virtue of its relation to other objects, not because of its connection with the subject. Thus the moon is external to my perception in that its position and motion are determined, not in terms of my apprehension, but in relation to the motion of other spheres. Objects, in brief, are independent of perception, but not of conception. To affirm the independence and externality of the real without qualification is to identify the new doctrine with dogmatic or naïve realism.

Reality, in such a view, is deprived of all stiffness; it is a conceptual construction, a product of the activity of thought. It is true that objects are relatively self-enclosed and stable, but this character, so far from being original and inherent, is secondary and derived. Cut out of a larger and plastic context by thought, objects are endowed with the marks of the real by the very process to which they are commonly considered antithetical. Such a flexible notion of matter entails no insoluble problem of appearance. For reality and appearance, on this view, differ not as one order from another, but as a section of cloth differs from a larger piece from which it has been excised. The part cut out, because more useful, is called real; the remainder, mere appearance. The true difference between the two sections is one of value to the cutter. Reality and appearance are in truth but concepts of praise and blame; we employ the first or the second according as we desire to extol or disparage. The hoary problem of



locating vagrant illusions thus loses its meaning. The wheel has come full circle; the fact of appearance, though admitted, no longer threatens or disturbs.

The essential character of the new realism should now be evident. So far from being a party, as is supposed, to the ancient dispute between subjectivism and naïve realism, the new doctrine is rather critic as much of the second as of the first of these theories, whose premises are the same. Its salient feature is the negation of the conception of substance. Some exponents of the doctrine, imperfectly grasping its logic, have, it is true, denied spiritual substance while affirming the cognate conception of matter. But so evident is it that the two absolutes stand or fall together, that this error could hardly have been committed, save that the new interpretation was elaborated in opposition to subjectivism, and so temporarily made an alliance with dogmatic realism. Had the latter been orthodox and regnant, it is probable that the nascent hypothesis, developing with a new emphasis, would have been called the 'new idealism.' Certain it is that the designation 'realism' here loses its historic significance. In the circumstance that subjectivism is to some degree critical, the current doctrine stands, on the whole, in closer relation to it than to common-sense realism. It might perhaps most fittingly be entitled the 'new empiricism.'

What is the significance of the new realism? It is significant, I believe, solely as a revolt against the premises of dualism. Like Reid's reply to Hume, it is chiefly a critical, not a constructive, undertaking. By it, philosophers indoctrinated with the postulates of British thought may be conducted to the standpoint of monistic metaphysics, but in the elaboration of the latter system they will be advanced scarcely a step. It is for this reason, no doubt, that philosophers like Professor Creighton, though standing in no essential opposition to the new doctrine, view it nevertheless with indifference. For while it is the merit of the new realism to have rejected as pseudo-problems the construction of knowledge and the demonstration of its va-

lidity, it is its defect not to have sharpened its concepts with reference to any other difficulties. Indeed, the sole aim of the doctrine is just to construct, on the assumption of immediate perception of reality, a system of principles opposed point for point to the structure of dualism, and so to refute the latter. But as not infrequently occurs, this aim entailed a degree of bondage to the conception controverted. To refute the notion that mind and matter are substances, the new realism committed itself thoughtlessly to an image no less concrete and picturable, that of discrete neutral states. Though effective against the inveterate dogmas of an ancient tradition, this static and atomistic notion is far too crude a tool to serve in the erection of a complex monistic metaphysics. Justly to view the world from this standpoint, the philosopher must attain to the subtle, unpictureable conception of experience as self-sustaining and self-determining, a process that reveals reciprocally the nature of subject and object. The central doctrine of the new realism is thus a ladder by which to mount from the plains of dualism to the heights of a strictly empirical philosophy; once this elevation is attained, it becomes thereafter an intolerable burden.

## SOME COMMENTS ON INSTRUMENTALISM

EDMUND H. HOLLANDS

SOME fifteen years have passed since the critics of pragmatism first objected that it had taken no account of theoretical truth as distinct from 'practical'; that the thought-situations which it discussed were always cases of 'finding one's way out of the woods,' 'discovering the remedy for my dyspepsia,' and so on; and never cases of 'finding the algebraic equation to a geometrical locus,' 'ascertaining the relation of the hypothetical judgment to the disjunctive,' or 'determining the true cause of the ostracism of Themistocles.' The criticism seemed to hit a tender spot; at all events, the supposed restriction of pragmatic theory was at once disclaimed, and rather indignantly. It was explained that the 'practical' had been meant to include all interests, and of course that of theoretical cognition among the rest. "It is . . . simply idiotic," said Professor James, for example, "to repeat that pragmatism takes no account of purely theoretic interests. All it insists on is that verity in act means *verifications*, and that these are always particulars."<sup>1</sup> Such verifications for James meant attaining, getting to, a sought percept, or a sought concept; for concepts belonged to the manifold reality, he held, quite as much as percepts, though in a different order.

James did not leave a finished system of metaphysics behind him; it is left doubtful, for example, how far he would have required or accepted panpsychism in completing his account of the real. Things-percepts-ideas and ideas-concepts, the physical order and the psychical order, are classes which cut across each other in his conception of them; but they get into working connection, so to speak, in the activities of living bodies, or at least in those of some

<sup>1</sup> *The Meaning of Truth*, pp. 211ff.



of them,—‘psycho-physical organisms.’ This is the position in which James’s theory of reality and truth agrees with that of Professor Dewey and the instrumentalists; but while he did not develop it, and continued to use the terminology of introspective analysis and empiricism, they have based their whole philosophy on an explicit use of organism and environment, stimulus and response, in short, the categories of biology.

The most important example of this difference in emphasis and method, it seems to me, is to be found in the contrast between James’s attempt at solving the classical problem of the ‘meaning of an idea,’ and the answer given by the instrumentalists. Using the traditional terminology, we say that the true idea must agree with its object. Of course, James remarked, we must not take ‘agreement’ too literally; any kind of resemblance, or getting at, or substitutability, that meets the needs of the particular case, will be ‘agreement.’ But the object with which the idea agrees must be the object which the idea ‘means’; accidental agreement, of course, is not enough; agreement must be *intended*. The question at once occurs, since the whole connection referred to is described as a process in time, how we know in advance what the idea means, unless it transcends itself, as the ‘idealist’ logicians sometimes say; and James answered that we did not, that we find out what an idea really means by seeing to what it leads. In other words, its meaning really is its agreement! Meaning is simply a process of leading begun, and agreement the same process terminated. On this view, truth is very literally something which happens to an idea. The circle in the original definition, taken in this way, seems evident; we ought not to say, the true idea agrees with *its* object, but, the true idea agrees with *some* object. But what becomes then of the caution that it must agree with an object which it means; that “if it resemble without operating on, it is a dream; if it operate without resembling, it is an error?”<sup>1</sup>

James did not allow himself to be troubled by the paradox;

<sup>1</sup> *The Meaning of Truth*, p. 28.

and this was undoubtedly, I should say, because he felt that the whole interest of the question, as he viewed it, lay in the 'operation', of which the 'resemblance' was only the result; 'meaning' really made 'agreement', brought it into being. In fact, agreement is the means, and successful operation (operation *with* resembling) the end. The operation of a true idea (whatever that may be, and it must be admitted that the term was a vague one when extended to cover theoretical knowing) is a process, then, which produces its own means. But this is exactly one thing which we say of life; it is a process which produces its own means.

This is the dialectic by which the pragmatism of James passes over into the instrumentalism of Dewey. The instrumentalists attacked the same problem by making knowledge from the first and throughout an incident in organic behavior of a certain type. Intelligence is regarded as a series of fulgurations, so to speak, elicited by special difficulties in the adaptation of a living individual to its environment, which require a new kind of response. 'Agreement' from this point of view is successful functioning in such a response, the fact that the 'idea' has been a means in the prosperous preservation and redirection of the organic activities. Meaning is always a prospective matter, a leading, which gets made and established, originally at least, in the active process of choice and discovery when the originally presented responses to the given situation are incompatible courses of action. How the idea can mean in advance what it agrees with is thus an idle question. "The process of organization is as much a process of securing a stimulus" (*i. e.*, meaning) "as it is a process of securing response" (*i. e.*, agreement).<sup>1</sup> The paradox is thus avoided, and meaning is accounted for without appeal to any factor transcending the momentary situation, which in the end, as it extends beyond the focus of adjustment, is just the physical world. How, at such points, it proves capable of modification into meanings, how existents can become subsistents, how the

<sup>1</sup> B. H. Bode, "The Psychological Doctrine of Focus and Margin," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXIII, 1914, p. 403.

outside has an inside,—this is a mystery; but no more so than any other complexity appearing in the course of things over and above its more elemental factors. “That suggestion occurs is doubtless a mystery; but so is it a mystery that hydrogen and oxygen make water. It is one of the hard, brute facts that we have to take account of.” Use a suggested thing, “develop it in connection with other meanings and employ it as a guide of investigation,” and “you have a full-fledged meaning.”<sup>1</sup>

The metaphysics implied in this logic, so much more consistently worked out than that of James, is evidently naturalism. What produces and supports all values, including truth, is the physical world, nature with living men as included in it. All verification is, in the last resort, physical. “Overt action is demanded if the worth or validity of the reflective considerations is to be determined. Otherwise, we have, at most, only a hypothesis that the conditions of difficulty are such and such, and that the way to get at them so as to get over or through them is so and so. This way must be tried in action; it must be applied, physically, in the situation. . . . That all knowledge, as issuing from reflection, is experimental (*in the literal physical sense of experimental*) is then a constituent proposition of this doctrine.” I continue to quote, because these statements of Professor Dewey are the clearest and most definite in regard to this side of instrumentalism that I know. “*The reason it [thinking] is not an armchair thing is that it is not an event going on exclusively within the cortex or the cortex and the vocal organs. . . . Hands and feet, apparatus and appliances of all kinds are as much a part of it as changes in the brain. . . . Thinking is mental, not because of a peculiar stuff which enters into it or of peculiar non-natural activities which constitute it, but because of what physical acts and apparatus do; the distinctive purposes for which they are employed and the distinctive results which they accomplish.*” And “mere meaning” is “supernatural or transcendental nonsense. ‘Terms’ signify that certain absent existences are indicated

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic*, pp. 49, 50.



by certain given existences, in the sense that they are abstracted and fixed for intellectual use *by some physically convenient means, such as a sound or a muscular contraction of the vocal organs.*"<sup>1</sup>

It is evident that imageless thought would be indeed the great scandal of instrumentalism, worse than the incommensurability of the square's diagonal was for the Pythagoreans. But this is perhaps too controversial a matter to insist on now, though it seems to me of considerable importance in this connection. Imageless thought would mean a gap in that physical series which instrumentalism requires to be absolutely continuous, since it identifies terms entirely with things. If for the moment we pass over this, and some other questions which might be raised about the meaning of what is past, and so on, we must admit, I think, that the instrumentalists' account of the production of meanings in practical situations of physical adjustment really does clear many things up. In fact, its straightforward naturalism and realism, so far taken, are genuine elements of appeal and strength in their position.

But while the instrumentalists succeed better with the question of meaning than did James, it is doubtful whether they can as readily find room for theoretical knowing within their account as James could in his less strait and consistent theory. In one matter, to be sure, I believe that Professor Dewey's account is to be preferred here also. James usually regarded concepts as having two kinds of value. Their primary and direct use, of course, was to take the place of the many percepts which temporal and spatial limitations prevented our attaining and having directly; but then, in the second place, concepts have certain values of their own for our appreciation, especially as they fall into the systems of logic and mathematics. The enriching overtones and wider significances which such general meanings add to experience, and the thorough change in the perceptual which is thus accomplished, James did not emphasize. He had

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic*, pp. 13f., and 51, note. Italics mine.

something of the impressionist about him, and his ideas and impressions rather co-existed than fused. Professor Dewey adequately recognizes this enriching character of the concept: "While reflective knowing is instrumental to gaining control in a troubled situation, . . . it is also instrumental to the enrichment of the immediate significance of subsequent experiences. And it may well be that this by-product, this gift of the gods, is incomparably more valuable for living a life than is the primary and intended result of control, essential as is that control to having a life to live. . . . There exists no disjunction between æsthetic qualities which are final yet idle, and acts which are practical or instrumental." <sup>1</sup> This states the matter well; but ought not such a recognition of the work of mind, and of the smooth continuity of the notional with the total texture of experience, to have some modifying effect upon the naturalistic basis of this theory?

These functions of concepts are, however, only a small part of the problem of theoretical truth. The real question, of course, is whether there are not thought-situations never adequately to be stated in naturalistic terms. That the situations with which the theorist deals have, taken in their entirety, physical factors and effects, may be in one sense true; but can they be adequately defined in terms of these, or are these relevant to his specific interests in them? Once on a time, the scientific account of comets destroyed some false beliefs concerning their ominous significance for human affairs, and thereby changed men's actions. That result is over and done. Should the scientist now withdraw his interest in comets as no longer vital, or is he justified in continuing to study them? And if so, why? How can the study in any way help us to a desired control which is other than intellectual? I can think of but two replies to such questions as these, from the point of view of a naturalistic instrumentalism: either it might be said that such study and interest is a prophylactic against the superstition which might return if it lapsed, or a faith might be asserted that no knowl-

<sup>1</sup> *Essays in Experimental Logic*, pp. 17f.

edge whatever will be without practical effects sometime, somewhere. Neither answer seems very satisfactory.

Professor Dewey, of course, recognizes the scientific interest; but it is described as a professional or specialist interest. "In the actual stress of any needed determination it is of the greatest importance to have a large stock of possible meanings to draw on, and to have them ordered in such a way that we can develop each promptly and accurately, and move quickly from one to another. It is not to be wondered at then that we not only conserve such suggestions as have been previously converted into meanings, but also that we (or some men at least) turn professional inquirers and thinkers; that meanings are elaborated and ordered in related systems quite apart from any immediately urgent situation." "As a specialised class of scientific inquirers develops, terms that were originally *by-products* of reflection become primary objects for the intellectual class. The troubles which occasion reflection are then *intellectual* troubles, discrepancies within some current scheme of propositions and terms. . . . The resulting objects—the terms and propositions—are for all, except those who produce them, instruments, not terminal objects."<sup>1</sup> How such discrepancies are physically present, as the general theory seems to require, is not stated. Presumably they must be incompatible contractions of the vocal organs or other like activities of gesture or speech, such as terms are defined as being. It has been said that the imagery of Platonists is probably of the visual type, and the same remark, I believe, has been made concerning the British Empiricists. One wonders whether a psychological census of the instrumentalists would not put most of them,—or all,—in the 'motilist' class. However this may be, such statements as those just quoted concerning theoretical reflection seem to take two things for granted: first, that naïve experience raises no problems save those of action; and second, that the theoretical interest makes no appeal to any but the specialistic few.

<sup>1</sup> *Essays in Experimental Logic*, pp. 49, 59f.



But is it not true, in the first place, that it is common sense which produces most of the problems for which Professor Dewey sometimes reproaches philosophy, since he regards them as unreal and futile? How a mind can know things, how the soul and body are related to each other,—these and other problems are involved in notions which are earlier than philosophy. What philosophy has done is to help men to think their way through them, and sometimes out of them, or, in sheer weariness, by them. The enthusiastic return of the instrumentalist to “naïve realism” is that of a highly sophisticated wanderer, and its full meaning can be appreciated only by those who have likewise wandered. Deliberate abstinence from metaphysics is an unnatural and laborious attainment, to achieve which requires the arduous training of philosophy.

For, in the second place, it is true that to theorize is natural to man. Men delight in theorizing, in taking synoptic views of experience, and the contemplative mind has its own rights,—and duties. A philosophy which devotes itself to the reflective satisfaction of this interest in theory is not “undemocratic,” but more broadly humane than one which rejects this task. Some years ago a book was written in which pragmatism was described as the philosophy of a materialistic democracy, envying and suspecting intellectual superiority, and bent on comfort and success at the expense of truth. James thereupon characterized the book as a “sociological romance.” Is there not something of the sociological romance in the frequent assumption that only instrumentalism is genuinely democratic, since other philosophies are devoted to the ‘aristocratic’ end of contemplation, and scorn to concern themselves with the urgent difficulties of ordinary men? Philosophy as a program of social reform is not a new thing in the world, and it is the business of thought to enable men to appreciate the good they already have as well as to enable them to bring new good into being. It is the business of philosophy, also, to raise the principles on which men act to the level of explicit reflection and system, in order that they may be criticised and tested, and

also in order that the ideal achievement of one generation may be preserved for the generations that follow. These are all human interests, and their successful realization can be only through speculation and theory.

It is characteristic that instrumentalism, speaking broadly, has been most successful in the field of ethics, where its methodology is practically a theory of the subject matter as well. No system which omits a metaphysic is a complete philosophy, and such systems in the past have never preserved their equilibrium against the normal metaphysical impulse. But while instrumentalism in its present form is certainly naturalistic, Professor Dewey tells us that it neither will nor can be a metaphysic. Particular explanations of particular facts are all it either gives or requires. "The chief characteristic trait of the pragmatic notion of reality is precisely that no theory of Reality in general, *überhaupt*, is possible or needed. It occupies the position of an emancipated empiricism or a thoroughgoing naïve realism. It finds that 'reality' is a *denotative* term, a word used to designate indifferently everything that happens. . . . Pragmatism is content to take its stand with science; . . . for science finds all such events to be subject-matter of description and inquiry."<sup>1</sup> The meaningless problem of determining the real by way of contrast with the unreal is thus rejected; but along with it goes every discrimination between the constituents of the real as to significance for a general theory of reality. In fact, there is no such theory; the sciences are enough.

Two questions arise in regard to this refusal to be metaphysical: (1) Is it consistently adhered to? (2) Is it a sufficient justification, supposing its propriety were admitted, for a certain noteworthy gap in instrumentalism?

Instrumentalism takes its stand with the sciences. But among the sciences, for its own purposes as a general theory of control, it finds biology especially significant. Now the most striking characteristic of modern biological theory is that it comprises two classes of ideas, widely different in

<sup>1</sup> *Creative Intelligence*, p. 55.

nature and tendency. To the one class belong the ideas of organism and environment, stimulus and response, adaptation and selection, and all the intellectual apparatus of the evolution-hypothesis; to the other belong Mendelian determinants, unit-characters, and all the mechanics of heredity. The latter may be congenial matter for the contemplation of an analytic realist; but they have no special appeal for the instrumentalist, and they are in logical contradiction with any genuine evolution. This does not especially perplex the working biologist, perhaps, so far as he is not concerned with ultimate logical consistency; *he* is dealing with particular 'events' as "subject-matter of description and inquiry." But it is a matter of vital interest for the instrumentalist, and he does not hesitate to select the first set of ideas as his categories, because they enable him to reflectively construe experience, while the other set, used in the same inclusive and analogical way, do not. Now what is this selective use of categories, so far as it goes, but the method of a critically speculative metaphysics? And what forbids us to push it farther, to recognize frankly the limits of naturalistic explanation, and so add to this view of things the peculiar qualities of the real that thought reveals as it frees itself from the network of immediate circumstance?

I come in conclusion to the "noteworthy gap" mentioned above. It has been sometimes objected that instrumentalism does not face the mind and body problem; that the reflex-arc theory might perhaps state the conditions under which intellection appears, but did not account for consciousness. Now the instrumentalist, so far as he conducts his discussion with the idealist, may counter with the remark that neither does idealism account for mind. But it must be replied that idealism presupposes mind systematically, which is a very different matter: it regards reality as always and everywhere involving thought as well as things. Thus, making thought an ultimate factor in experience, Hegel for instance may be asked what work or place is left for individual mind, perhaps; or he may be asked how mind and body are related in an individual conscious organism. Such questions may



be reasonably addressed to the objective idealist; but he cannot be reasonably asked to account for mind in general. But this is just what instrumentalism must be asked to do, since it systematically refuses to presuppose mind, and recognizes only particular cases, so to speak, of mind arising from situations in which there was no mind in any sense. And this is just the question which instrumentalism is necessarily incapable of answering, because it insists on remaining a method of particular cases, and relying on the naturalistic explanation of these.

These statements require some further explanation. Reflection, as the instrumentalist rightly insists, arises in situations which are non-reflectional: "situations of prizing and aversion, of seeking and finding, of converse, enjoyment and suffering, of production and employment, of manipulation and destruction." Such phrases, the use of the term 'experience' to cover the whole continuum of situations and reflections, and the description of these situations as "social, affectional, technological, æsthetic, and so on," apparently imply that another form of consciousness is present where reflection is not. But we must not suppose that this is meant *universally*; we are warned against such an understanding of these statements. "Consciousness is only a very small and shifting portion of experience. . . . *In* the experience, and in it in such a way as to *qualify* even what is shiningly apparent, are all the physical features of the environment, extending out into space no one can say how far, and all the habits and interests, extending backward and forward in time, of the organism. . . . And if we are asked why not then use a general objective term like 'world,' or 'environment,' the answer is that the word 'experience' suggests something indispensable which these terms omit: namely, an actual focussing of the world at one point in a focus of immediate shining apparen-<sup>1</sup>cy."

The instrumentalist use of the term 'experience,' then, does not connote that consciousness is present even when reflection or judgment is not; but it means rather that con-

<sup>1</sup> Quotations from Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic*, pp. 2, 3, 6-7.

sciousness is present *somewhere* in the world, and that the rest of the world is in 'dynamic connection' with it. There remains the question: Is consciousness in some form present *sometimes* when reflection is not? In other words, is there such a thing as non-reflective, "immediate" consciousness? And, as far as Professor Dewey is concerned, the answer seems, at first glance, to be plainly affirmative. The passages already quoted concerning the enrichment of subsequent experience by reflection which appears primarily as control, and many others of the same kind, plainly indicate this.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the ideas of tension, conflict, and so on, as yet unsolved, but stimulants to intellectual activity, connote such non-reflective consciousness. And if we have some lingering suspicion that its status is left uncertain, and that after all it may be taken as physiological behavior with *no* conscious side, these may be removed by examining such a fuller statement of instrumentalist psychology as that now given by Professor Bode.<sup>2</sup> It is there made plain that what is essential is the explanation of consciousness as an organization of behavior with regard to future consequences: "The rendering of future stimulations or results into terms of present existence. Consciousness is a name for a certain change that takes place in the stimulus; or, more specifically, it is a name for the control of conduct by future results or consequences." This applies to perception as well as to judgment, "to every form of quality and relation."<sup>3</sup>

Consciousness then has two forms: unreflective and reflective. But it is always a particular activity of individual organic adjustment, and judgment is simply the sort of adjustment or control required when the kind of response needed is as yet unknown. It is worth noticing, also, that there is a very pretty correspondence between Professor Dewey's account of judgment and Professor Bode's account of consciousness, so far as the latter reinterprets the current

<sup>1</sup> Cf., for example, *Essays in Experimental Logic*, pp. 4, 23 (the remark about "imagination"), 62f.

<sup>2</sup> See his essay in *Creative Intelligence*, pp. 228-281.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 243, 244.

psychological distinction of "focus and margin." What judgment terminates in is a thing known, and not knowledge, says Professor Dewey; what is at the focus is a thing in the physical world, a thing perceived, and not consciousness, says Professor Bode. Consciousness is the 'margin,' where control is in the making, where the stimulus is changing.

As it stands, then, this psychology is consistent as well as acute; there are certain parallels in it to Hegel's account of subjective mind which are interesting, but must be omitted here. My present question is: Is this psychology a sufficient account of mind? It confines itself to the topics of perception and of judgment. What can it do, at one extreme, with feeling, and at the other, with the recognition of other minds, with knowing the same truth as others do, and with the acknowledgment of the social institutions which embody common interests and ideals? What can it do, that is, with enjoyments and aversions? And how can it account for the universal and the social in conscious experience, and for what Hegel called 'objective mind'?

That enjoyment and aversion may be elements in control, or results of control, is admitted. On the theory proposed, however, they can be elements only if they have already been results; and as *results* (that is, as 'focal') they are *not* consciousness. One may be ready to grant the truth of James's shrewd remark that pleasures and pains are ambiguous things, which may be taken as either 'physical' or 'psychical.' But to take them as ever not 'psychical' at all seems absurd.

The second question is, of course, a more serious one. At first sight, it may seem surprising that it should be asked. Is instrumentalism, which makes so much of the social, incapable of really recognizing it, compatibly with its general theory? The answer is: Yes, if it remains naturalistic and positivistic; if it insists on regarding everything that is real as a particular fact or event in the physical world. Take the character of my friend, for instance. It is something which I judge and infer; but it is even more something which



I sympathetically appreciate. It is good for what it is, more than for what it does. It belongs to an order of ideal goods, which rise out of nature but are not physical; and my adaptation or response to it must take place by an inner assimilation to it. It is no event, or series of events, though it may be in part a result of events, and a cause of further events. How can it be known, on the account of the instrumentalists' psychology, for which mind is always particular reactions in a particular organism?

Or again, take any institution of organized society, such as a school system. It is the product of human wills and purposes, it is a means to realize certain interests, and it makes use of and includes physical things as well as human acts. But what holds it together, maintains it, and keeps it going, is a common recognition of an end as valuable. This end is subject to revision and change; but for the most part it serves as a standard to judge by, instead of a problem to judge about. How is it known as a common end? It is not, while being used as a standard, the result of that judgment; and it is not, of course, in a sensational margin. So apparently it is not in 'consciousness'; but neither is it any other event or fact in nature.

All of this corresponds to the remark already made that thought must enable us to know and appreciate attained good as well as to create new; or again, to the statement that developed social control involves a factor which is at once independent of that particular case of control, and also not adequately described as a fact, event, or thing in the physical world. For what happens in such cases as these is no pre-established harmony, but a unity of action created from within by a common recognition of a common good. Nature thus turns out to be more than its first appearance as physical.

Any reader who has followed to this point will, I hope, have read between the lines of the objections to instrumentalism an acknowledgment of its real achievements. The conclusions of the argument may be summarily stated as follows: First, the naturalism of instrumentalism, as it stands, is at

odds with its insistence on moral values; second, instrumentalism ought to subordinate naturalism, and become whole-heartedly metaphysical. If it did so, it would make instrumentalism itself a chapter in a new development of idealism.

## PRAGMATISM AND THE CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF TRUTH

ELLEN BLISS TALBOT

THE task of this paper is to consider the correspondence theory as contrasted with the pragmatic doctrine of the nature of truth. In the main its purpose is defensive; that is, we shall be concerned chiefly with trying to show that the theory in question is not in quite so perilous a situation as the pragmatists would have us believe. Further, we shall take the theory in itself, free from entangling alliances with certain other doctrines which pragmatists commonly, but I think erroneously, assume to be a necessary part of it. Chief among these are the doctrines that reality is a unitary whole, that it is essentially changeless, and that it is an all-inclusive spirit. It is possible to be in doubt with regard to any or all of these,—or even to reject them,—and still to maintain that what we mean by truth is the agreement of thought with reality; and it is with this latter proposition that we are here concerned.

In trying, then, to defend the correspondence theory we are not assuming a hostile attitude toward all features of pragmatism, and the question whether we should be called 'intellectualists' will depend upon the definition of that term. This poor word has fallen upon days so evil that one could hardly be blamed for preferring another appellation; but since we shall need in this discussion a name for those who differ from the pragmatists chiefly in espousing the correspondence theory, I shall use the term 'intellectualist' in this sense, and in this alone.<sup>1</sup>

My own position, then, may be called moderate intellectualism. I heartily assent to the doctrine that change is

<sup>1</sup> And corresponding with it, the word 'intellectualism.'



an essential feature of reality.<sup>1</sup> In an important sense also I should agree that our thinking alters reality. And finally, I believe that all thought is for the sake of some end (though I may not be in full agreement with pragmatism as to the nature of this end). But on the other hand, I am not able to accept the pragmatic doctrine of truth; I believe that the truth of a theory consists, not in its successful working, but in its correspondence with reality.<sup>2</sup>

The first thing to be said is, that if the controversy as to truth is simply with regard to the particular meaning to be given to a certain term, no sensible person would think it worth while to carry on a long argument about it with the pragmatists. We all believe, I presume, that there is such a thing as the successful working of a theory. Some of us think also that there is such a thing as the agreement of a theory with a reality other than itself. And if the question is merely to which of the two the word 'truth' shall be applied, I, for my part, have no wish to quarrel with our pragmatist friends. To be sure, one might make out a fair case of grievance against them by urging that for many generations the word 'truth' has been used to connote the agreement of a judgment with reality, and that even if they are in need of some word to stand for 'successful working,' this need hardly justifies them in committing highway robbery and forcibly appropriating a term in which some other conception has good property rights. One might, I say, make out such a case. But not being of a litigious disposition, I am not inclined to quarrel about the ownership of any word. If the pragmatist will grant that the utility of a theory and its correspondence with reality are two distinct conceptions, both valid and both important, I for one shall be willing to let him christen his infant prodigy 'truth' and shall set out cheerfully in search of another cognomen for the now nameless and despised offspring of intellectualism. The change would indeed have some unpleasant consequences, such as

<sup>1</sup> Meaning by this, that whether all reality is in process of change or not, at least some large and important realms of being are.

<sup>2</sup> *I. e.*, with the particular reality with which it professes to correspond.

the necessity of translating into the new terminology most of the philosophical literature prior to the year 1900. But if pragmatism is not deterred by unfortunate practical consequences, who is intellectualism that she should raise her voice in protest?

If, then, the dispute were simply as to the property rights in a certain philosophical term, I should have no interest in it. But while in some cases it looks as if the pragmatist were arguing merely about the application of a word, there can be little doubt that the divergence between him and the intellectualist is usually more serious.

As a preliminary to considering the nature of this divergence, I shall try to say what I mean by the correspondence of thought with reality. And in order to avoid needless complications, let us refrain from assuming any reality other than experience. The 'radical empiricism' of Professor James, the 'instrumentalism' of the Chicago School, and the 'humanism' of Dr. Schiller, all seem to involve the identification of reality with experience.<sup>1</sup> We need not stop to ask whether this identification is really essential to pragmatist doctrine, nor even whether it is correct.<sup>2</sup> What I wish to do is rather to point out that even if it is true that there is no reality other than experience, it does not follow that the conception of the correspondence of thought with reality has no meaning.<sup>3</sup> For it is surely still conceivable that one portion of experience may profess to represent or correspond with some other portion. In such case, the portion that professes to represent is called the 'thought,' and the other portion the 'reality' (or the 'object').

Now it may be conceded to the pragmatists that it is not easy to say just what we mean by 'representing' or 'corre-

<sup>1</sup> And apparently with experience of the human type, if not, in all cases, with human experience.

<sup>2</sup> Certainly we may grant that if there is any reality wholly unrelated to experience and incapable of coming into relation to it, there is no occasion for our troubling our heads about it.

<sup>3</sup> Unless what is meant is that all reality is my present experience; and he pragmatists of course do not mean this.

sponding.' In some cases, as Professor James has pointed out, it may, without any great stretching of the term, be called 'copying.' When, for example, I believe myself to remember in detail a former experience of mine and to remember it in terms similar to that of the original experience,<sup>1</sup> I believe that my present thought 'copies' that earlier experience. To be sure, I do not assume that it is altogether like its predecessor. There are the differences in time-setting, the differences between image and perception, and still others that need not be mentioned here. But although I am more or less aware of these differences, still I believe,—when I say that I 'remember,'—that my present experience is what may fairly be called a copy of the earlier one, just as we might say that a photograph is the copy of a landscape, in spite of its lack of color, its smaller size, and so on. When we say that my memory copies that earlier experience, we mean that it is like it in certain important points, though unlike it in others.

But also I may be ready to say that my present idea agrees with my past experience, even though I am aware that the two are quite different in their terms. Suppose, for example, that I profess to remember the substance of something that you said to me months ago. I may not recall the sound of your voice, as you spoke, nor the expression of your face; I may not be sure of the particular words that you used. Yet I insist that my memory of that past event is accurate. Why? Because I believe that the words in terms of which I am now thinking have a meaning similar to that of the words that you employed. That is, I insist that my thought corresponds with that past reality because the two are alike in meaning.

It is clear, then, that when we assume the correspondence of our thought with something other than itself, the similarity may be of various sorts. But in each case the two are supposed to agree in some respect that is important for the purpose involved. If I am trying in vain to recall the sub-

<sup>1</sup> *I. e.*, to remember in visual terms what was originally visual experience, in auditory terms what was originally auditory, and so forth.



stance of what you said on that past occasion, it boots little that I can remember where you sat, how you looked, and how your voice sounded. For my thought does not agree with its reality *in the respect in which it means to agree*; and so long as it does not do this it is futile. When we say that a judgment is true, we mean that it agrees with some particular portion of reality in the respect in which it intends to agree.

Having shown what we understand by correspondence, we may now try to offer some defense of the conception. I have said that even if we assume that there is no reality other than experience, it is still conceivable that one portion of experience may profess to correspond with some other portion. Now I submit that this which I have declared conceivable is something that on the face of it seems also to *be*. It certainly seems as if there were parts of our experience that assume to correspond with something other than themselves. As has already been suggested, it is not necessary for us to decide here whether that 'other' is also in every case a portion of experience. We are trying to establish the validity of the conception of correspondence. And for that purpose it does not matter whether the correspondence be between a present and a past experience of mine, between my experience and yours, between my experience and that of 'the Absolute,' or finally between my experience and a 'physical object.'

This, then, is my first contention, that thought *professes* to agree with some reality other than itself. And my second is that there *is* a reality other than thought,—that is, than a particular thought,—and that therefore the question whether a particular thought does or does not agree with its reality<sup>1</sup> is not meaningless.

As to the first of these two points, the question is this: When we form a theory, do we believe ourselves to be making a plan of action,<sup>2</sup> or on the contrary to be making some as-

<sup>1</sup> *I. e.*, the reality with which it means to agree.

<sup>2</sup> The pragmatists usually alternate, I think, between the two views that a theory is a plan of action and that it is the anticipation of conse-

sersion about the nature of reality? To this the ordinary man would reply, I think, that a plan of action is one thing and a theory another, and that when he makes a theory he intends to make some assertion about the nature of reality. For example, the physician to whom you recount your symptoms tells you that you have appendicitis. Now it may quite well be that he has a plan of action,—either medical treatment or surgery; let us hope that he has, since obviously something ought to be done. And further it may quite well be that his plan is vitally related to his theory; let us hope that this also is the case. Still it does not follow that the plan and the theory are identical. And that they are not one and the same thing for the ordinary man seems to me clear.

And not only is this true of the non-scientific minds, which form the greater part of mankind, but it seems also to be true of the majority of scientists. The scientific man may indeed hold that most of our theories,—even of the best ones,—fail to correspond perfectly with reality. But if he believes this, he believes at the same time that most of our theories are *not completely true*. With comparatively few exceptions, I think, the scientist still means by truth what ordinary folk mean. And in saying this I am not unmindful of the pragmatist's contention that his notion of truth is that of the scientist. It seems to me, however, that this assertion still remains to be proved.<sup>1</sup>

quences. But inasmuch as the consequences in question are the consequences of the action, this wavering is not altogether unnatural.

<sup>1</sup> *E. g.*, Dr. Schiller says, "The physicist . . . more and more clearly sees both that he does not know what 'matter' ultimately is, and that for the purposes of his science he does not need to know, so long as the term stands for something the behavior of which he can calculate." "Axioms as Postulates," in *Personal Idealism*, 1902, p. 55. Yet, I reply, physicists still seem tremendously interested in the question what matter is and are ever and anon formulating new theories as to its constitution, in an effort, apparently, to get a description that shall come nearer to the reality than any hitherto proposed. It is doubtless true that there are physicists who are not interested in this question; but in view of the recent work that has been done I cannot see how any one can think that this represents the attitude of the majority of physicists.

That science, at least until the most recent times, conceived of truth

But in insisting that both ordinary folk and many scientists accept the notion of correspondence as valid, we are dwelling upon a relatively unimportant matter. For the pragmatist might concede the point and still urge that this widespread belief is erroneous. This brings us, however, to the second of my two contentions. For if you say that my thought believes itself to be making statements about reality, but is actually planning and initiating some operation or other, your assertion, it would seem, must rest upon the conviction that 'correspondence with reality' is a meaningless phrase. We may pass on, then, to our second thesis, namely, that there is something other than itself to which a particular thought points and that consequently there is meaning in the question whether the thought agrees with this reality.

To this, three important objections seem to have been made by the pragmatists: (1) that even if the agreement in question is conceivable, it is of no consequence because all that we ever care for is the successful working of our theory; (2) that even if there were agreement of our thought with reality, we could never know in a particular case whether we had attained it; and (3) that the notion of correspondence is meaningless because there *is* no reality apart from thought

as the correspondence of our judgments with reality seems to have been clearly recognized by Professor James himself (*cf. Pragmatism*, 1907, p. 56). And even when he goes on to define what he believes to be the attitude of contemporary science, I cannot see that his account excludes the conception of correspondence as I have described it. "As the sciences have developed farther," he says, "the notion has gained ground that most, perhaps all, of our laws are only approximations. ['To what?' one is tempted to ask.] . . . Investigators have become accustomed to the notion that no theory is absolutely a transcript of reality, but that any one of them may from some point of view be useful. Their great use is to summarize old facts and to lead to new ones. They are only a man-made language, . . . in which we write our reports of nature" (*ibid.*, pp. 56f.). Certainly, but we still write our *reports* of nature. And we still maintain, when we formulate a scientific theory, that although it may not be, and may not profess to be, "absolutely a transcript of reality," it is like reality in the respect in which it undertakes to be like it. And whenever we have reason to think that it is not like reality *in this respect*, we say, "I was mistaken; my theory is not true (or not completely true)."



in the sense which the intellectualist assumes. Let us take these objections in order.

(1) That all thought is purposive in character, that one never puts oneself to the trouble of thinking except for the sake of some end, is at present seldom denied. And the unanimity upon this point is in large measure due to the influence of the pragmatists. For while they were not the first to show that thinking presupposes an end, the vigor and persuasiveness with which they have preached the doctrine have had much to do with winning adherents to it. But to admit that thinking is purposive is not necessarily to grant that when we frame a theory our interest is confined to its practical consequences. The question hinges, of course, upon the meaning of the word 'practical,' and about this there has been vigorous debate. I shall try to state my own position as clearly as I can.

There is, of course, no question that in many cases our sole concern is with the successful working of our theory: what we are after is practical results, and given these we have no further interest in the matter. If, for example, I have started out to walk to a certain spot and can save myself a detour by crossing an ice-covered pond, the question whether the ice is strong enough to bear my weight is one whose importance for me is purely practical. All that I care for is to be able to shorten my walk without subjecting myself to an icy wetting and to other consequences that might be even more unpleasant. But while there are many cases of this sort, in which we care only that our theory shall work, there are others in which our desire seems to be for truth in another sense. We want to be assured that our thought corresponds with the reality that it professes to stand for; in other words we want knowledge for the sake of knowledge.

Why men are so constituted that they wish to understand *for no other reason than that they wish to understand* may not be easy to explain in detail. But *that* they are so constituted seems to be shown by observation and experience. And it can hardly be denied that the existence of the instinct, if instinct it be, justifies itself from the point of view of utility.

It is not difficult to see that it may often be highly desirable that a man should want knowledge solely for its own sake. That such a desire has been the motive of most of our philosophical thinking may not seem to all an indication of its utility; but that it has also been the source of a large part of our scientific achievement can hardly be denied. Pure science seems usually to have been inspired, not by the desire to control reality, but by the desire to understand it. And this has often been the case even when the final outcome of the scientific activity has been of great practical importance. Just as happiness is more likely to come as a by-product than as the result of a deliberate effort to gain it, so practical benefits of the highest order are often won for the race by men whose powers have all been given to the quest of something quite other than practical benefits of any sort.

(2) The second objection is that even if the conception of the agreement of thought with reality is admissible, still we cannot know in any particular case whether or not this agreement exists, because we cannot get the reality and the thought apart from each other so as to compare them.<sup>1</sup> To this the intellectualist commonly replies that successful working, in the broad sense, is the best indication that we have of the correspondence of our thought with reality. The theory is to be tested by the way in which it works, and its success is a sign of its truth.

As a matter of fact the intellectualist has as good means of knowing whether and to what extent his theory is true as the pragmatist has. For strictly speaking, the pragmatist himself cannot have absolute assurance of the truth of a theory. Successful working, he tells us, constitutes truth. But when we ask, "Successful for whom?" and "Successful for how long?" we are usually told that only those theories are true that work on the whole and in the long run.<sup>2</sup> Now it

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Schiller, *Humanism*, 1903, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> This statement is correct, I think, so far as most pragmatists are concerned. And in the cases in which it is not correct, there is the difficulty that apparently any theory that works well for any one must be called true. This difficulty is often to some extent hidden by the useful,—and hence, of course, unimpeachable,—phrase, "in so far forth."

is clear that no one can be *sure* that a given theory will work on the whole and in the long run; for 'the whole' and 'the long run' are quite as inaccessible to the pragmatist as 'reality' is to the intellectualist. In other words, for pragmatist and intellectualist alike the completely true is the ideal, which in a given case certainly cannot be known to have been attained and in all probability has not been attained.

The pragmatist might contend that in thus appealing to practical consequences the intellectualists are stealing his thunder. But to this we can reply that successful working has been regarded as the test of truth throughout the history of modern science, and that at least until the most recent times modern science has conceived of truth as agreement with reality.<sup>1</sup> And since intellectualism in the person of the scientist has for centuries been testing its theories by the appeal to facts, we can hardly deny the right of the intellectualist philosopher to make use of the same criterion.

But there is another ground on which one might object to our contention that the intellectualist can test the truth of his theory by its consequences. How, it may be asked, can one who conceives of truth as agreement know that the successful working of a theory is in any degree an indication of its correspondence with reality? That a given theory is at present working fairly well, in the limited field in which we are attempting to apply it, we can often know through observation, through the experience of its consequences. Pragmatism, then, because it *identifies* truth with successful working can at least say that the theory is true "in so far forth." But how can intellectualism be sure that successful working, either now or through a long period, points to even a partial agreement with reality? Why may it not as well be,—for aught we know,—that theories that work ill are the ones that agree with reality, or again that there is no connection of any sort between 'working' and 'agreement'?

<sup>1</sup> That this conception of truth was held by practically all scientists until our own day has been recognized by Professor James, as was pointed out above.



To this we may reply as follows. When you urge that intellectualism cannot know that successful working betokens agreement with reality, you of course assume, for the sake of the argument, that some theories do agree,—fairly well,—with reality and that others do not. Now on the basis of this assumption, how can there be doubt in the mind of anyone that, in general, theories that agree will be successful, when tried out, and those that do not agree will be unsuccessful? To suppose anything else would be to assume such a divorce between reality and our experience as no one to-day,—pragmatist, moderate intellectualist, or absolutist,—could contemplate as a possibility. The intellectualist, then, may assert as confidently as the pragmatist that the successful working of his theory gives reason for believing in its truth.

(3) We come finally to the third objection to the doctrine of correspondence,—namely, that the notion of agreement is nonsense because there is no such distinction between reality and our thought as the conception implies. This objection is voiced by Professor Dewey and Professor Moore in their protests against what the latter calls “the private-consciousness-outer-reality view of thought.”<sup>1</sup>

My reply to this objection must begin by assenting to a large part of what I understand Professor Dewey and Professor Moore to be contending for. The vital relation of our thought with reality must be granted by the intellectualist, if he maintains that we can know anything at all about the real, and also if he urges that the successful working of a theory is a sign of its truth. Both these doctrines imply that thought is in intimate contact with reality. And further I agree that thought “operates within reality.” For in the first place it is an integral part of reality; every act of thinking is itself real. And in the second place thought,—itself a

<sup>1</sup> For Professor Moore’s discussion see *Pragmatism and Its Critics*, pp. 225ff. Cf. Professor Dewey’s articles on “The Experimental Theory of Knowledge,” *Mind*, N. S., Vol. XV, 1906, pp. 293ff., and “The Logical Character of Ideas,” *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. V, 1908, pp. 375ff.

part of reality,—issues in action, which modifies other parts.

But while I believe that every thought is itself a part of reality and that through its connection with volition it may indirectly alter other parts, I do not see what is to be gained by confusing the cognitive function with the alterative. And it is with the cognitive that we are here concerned. Now in order that we may understand this function or even admit its possibility, we must assume, I have said, that thinking is intimately connected with the rest of reality. Thought reaches out and lays hold upon some portion of the real whenever we succeed in forming an approximately correct theory. That this reaching out and laying hold,—this which the intellectualist is fond of calling ‘the self-transcending function of thought,’—is possible at all means that thinking is not cut off from the rest of what is, that we do not live in a world of phenomena, to be sharply distinguished from another world of things-in-themselves.<sup>1</sup>

But assuming thus, as we must, that thinking and the rest of reality are closely connected, we do not necessarily assume that they are connected in such a way that the notion of their agreement is meaningless. And when we ask why, on the other hand, this notion seems to be required, I think the simplest answer is that it is required by the conception of other *persons*. What I mean is this. Professor Dewey, for example, recognizes that in a sense we must distinguish between a thought and the reality that it means; that is, they may be distinguished as two factors in a total situation. But when we ask what we are to understand by ‘thought’s meaning an object,’ we are told that the thought is an

<sup>1</sup> But here the pragmatist may protest that whereas *he* has good right to assert the vital connection of thought with its object, the intellectualist has no such right. I reply that all argument presupposes the possibility of the cognitive function, and that any one who admits its possibility must deny that there is an impassable gulf between thought and reality. Hence the pragmatist cannot say, *even to the intellectualist*, How do you know that thought can lay hold upon the real? For to ask the question is to admit the possibility of such a divorce between these two as would make the asking of all questions futile.

expectation of and demand for certain experiences that are to result from that manipulating (of the situation) which grows out of and is continuous with the thinking.<sup>1</sup>

Now in cases like the one that Professor Dewey uses for illustration,—where the thought is a smell and the object a rose,—one might let his statement pass without trying to challenge it.<sup>2</sup> But suppose that the object is a person and the thought is a belief, on the part of some one else, that this person is in a state of deep grief. I submit that in this case at least,—whatever may be true of odors and roses,—we are describing the situation falsely when we say that my belief that you are in sorrow is an expectation of experiences of mine that are to ensue upon the operation of that belief. It may be that there will be experiences and that they will be such as to verify my conjecture. But to say that my belief is the expectation of these and that its truth consists in their coming to pass is *to ignore your existence as a person*. For whether a rose is anything in its own right or not,—a question that we need not discuss here,—a person, if there be any such, is something in his own right. And either we should say that it is doubtful whether there *are* persons, or we should see to it that our theory of the nature of truth leaves room for them.

The pragmatists, as we know, protest that it is an act of injustice to accuse them of solipsism. Professor Moore, for example, reminds us of their “social conception of con-

<sup>1</sup> In Professor Dewey's own words, the “cognitional” experience is “fated or charged with the sense of the possibility of a fulfilment” of a certain character. It “is aware of something else which it means, which it intends to effect through an operation which it incites and without which its own presence is abortive.” “The Experimental Theory of Knowledge,” *Mind*, N. S., Vol. XV, 1906, p. 299. It is true that Professor Dewey calls this “cognitional experience” a “knowledge” (rather than judgment or belief); but he explains that he is using the word ‘knowledge’ in the sense of something that precedes verification, something that is “hypothetical, lacking in assurance, in categorical certainty.” *Ibid.*, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> I do not mean to say that there is not good ground for challenging it.



sciousness" and joins Professor Dewey in urging that the charge of solipsism can be established only if we make the false assumption that pragmatism accepts such antiquated notions as "private stream of consciousness," "other realities," and "correspondence" between these two. But I reply that *unless* you admit, in a case such as I have supposed, a consciousness in some degree private, and other reality in relation to it, and the possibility of correspondence between these two, I cannot see that you are admitting the reality of other persons at all. And if you are not, what shall it profit you to insist that your "conception of consciousness" is "social"?

I do not, of course, suppose that pragmatism intends to deny the reality of 'persons.' It seems to me, however, that the failure of the pragmatic theory of truth is most obvious when we try to apply it to a case in which one person makes some judgment about another person. When I have an experience of smell and exclaim, "There must be a rose in this room!" one might possibly say<sup>1</sup> that ultimately this means merely, "If I act thus and so, I shall have such and such experiences."<sup>2</sup> But when I say, "There is some other person in this room!" this cannot be interpreted as meaning *merely*, "If I act thus and so, I shall have such and such experiences." For when I assert the presence of another person, I not only imply that if I do certain things I shall have experiences of a certain sort; I also imply that I stand in relation to a reality over and above any experiences of mine, past, present, or future: I assert the reality of that

<sup>1</sup> I do not mean that this expresses my own belief in the matter, but simply that it is a position that one might conceivably take.

<sup>2</sup> I take 'thought' here as meaning for the pragmatist the anticipation of consequences and leave out of account the fact that he also often describes it as a plan for bringing these consequences to pass. I do this because I can put more simply the point that I wish to make, if I select that aspect of the pragmatic conception which seems to me the less open to objection. For one might be willing to interpret the judgment, "There is a rose in this room," as meaning, "If I act thus and so, I shall have such experiences," and yet dissent from the other interpretation, "I purpose to act in this way in order that I may have these experiences."

which, so far as I can see, not only is not, but never can be, my experience.<sup>1</sup>

To this, one must suppose, Professor Dewey would reply that in talking thus of what is and what is not 'my' experience I am begging the question: I first take for granted that he admits *my* private consciousness and then accuse him of denying the *other* private consciousness, whereas in fact he rejects them both. His point would be well taken, but the objection can be obviated by a slight change in our previous statement. Instead of saying that Professor Dewey's conception of the nature of thinking seems to ignore the reality of other persons than the thinker, we should have said that it seems to ignore the reality of all persons. My criticism, then, of the pragmatist's rejection of the notion of correspondence, more accurately put, is this. Such members of the pragmatic fold as would admit the fitness of the phrase 'my experience,'<sup>2</sup> in the case before us, cannot deny the validity of the conception of correspondence without virtually ignoring the reality of that other person to whom my judgment refers. And this seems to furnish some justification for the charge that pragmatism involves solipsism. If, however, a pragmatist, wishing to prove that he is not a solipsist, points triumphantly to his rejection of the "private-consciousness-outer-reality view of thought," we can answer that he has avoided the mistake of ignoring the reality of other persons only by the device of ignoring the reality of all persons. And the single point in this that is to his credit is its absolute impartiality.

With this I must bring my discussion of the correspondence theory to a close. But I am unwilling to stop without a word of explanation as to my attitude in the last argument. It is not, in its intent, an *argumentum ad populum*. In raising

<sup>1</sup> That it is possible for a judgment to mean something that can never be a part of "the same continuous experience series" with itself is well brought out by Professor Rogers in his "Statement of Epistemological Dualism," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. XIII, 1916, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> I venture to think that there are some.

the objection that Professor Dewey's theory seems to ignore the existence of persons, I do not mean to imply that the reason why this should not be ignored is that personality is important or sacred, though in another connection I should not hesitate to express my conviction that it is both important and sacred.<sup>1</sup> The only reason why a theory of knowledge should not ignore persons, it seems to me, is that to do so is to give a false account of our experience. That *some* experience at any rate, namely, that which I designate by calling it 'mine,' is personal,—that it is, at the very least,<sup>2</sup> a centralized whole of functions which are not adequately described by calling them 'intra-organic,'—this, I am old-fashioned enough to be willing to say, seems certain if anything at all is certain. And it is this centralized character, which I express when I say 'my' experience, that the "experimental theory of knowledge," like some other new theories, seems to ignore.

<sup>1</sup> A conviction which doubtless many pragmatists share.

<sup>2</sup> I think that we might say somewhat more than this, but I wish to restrict my assertion to the *minimum possibile*.



## IDEA AND ACTION

E. JORDAN

SINCE the discovery some years ago of the importance for psychology of the reflex-arc concept there has, it would seem, been instituted a general propaganda in the interest of applying the notion to the methods of all the sciences which touch in any way the human element. Not only has a very large part of the output of the psychological laboratory been committed quite exclusively to the mechanism involved in the concept, but recent attempts to go beyond the presuppositions of experiment merely, in the direction of a developed psychological theory, also seem to assume that all thought on matters psychological can consist only in descriptions of the way consciousness 'behaves.' And behavior as thus conceived is simply the sum of things done by consciousness through the instrumentality of the organism, in the interest of results achieved in the immediate material environment. Even the most refined value-aspects of ideas and feelings are but fluttering attempts to 'do things,' which somehow get smothered in the depths of the organism. Consciousness gets up in the morning, stretches its behavioristic legs, and its half-waking awareness of things is nothing more than the reverberation through the 'organism' of leg-stretching movements or tendencies to movement. It puts on its behavioristic clothes by hitching itself up to previous reflexes somehow left vibrating in the hypothetical organism; it recognizes itself as the same 'motor-complex' that went to bed the night before by tendencies to carry through the same motor reactions involved in locking up the house, which reactions still synaptically persist; its decision to meet the day's work is duly 'prefigured' in muscular effigiations, and it goes forth to conquer, reflexly rejoicing as a strong man.

Under the influence of the further assumption that all things can be explained psychologically, the same attitude has dominated other interests than those of scientific psychology. In economics the individual is now an economic force,—is, in fact, merely an element hopelessly involved in a system of ‘economic forces.’ With reference to production he is a ‘cost’ or a ‘resource’ or a labor ‘supply’; his existence is measured in ‘wants’ which are estimated in terms of ‘prices’ in distribution; he suffers dissolution through ‘consumption’ and his bones are gathered to his fathers in the potter’s field of economic waste. Sociology makes of him a tissue in the social organism (or ‘organization,’ as they seem to prefer to say now), girds up his loins with social forces, fulfills his destiny in social instincts, turns him over to the social reformers, who mark him off a lot in the New Jerusalem of socialized conditions.

To put the case briefly, from the point of view of the human sciences of the present, the human individual dissolves into a calculable sum of physical, biological, and psychological ‘conditions.’ It will be contended in this paper that this point of view originates in a psychology which has wrongfully appropriated the name of empirical or experimental and in a psychologized philosophy which has adopted a naïve, realistic materialism falsely supposed to rest on the principles of scientific method, and that its basis is to be found in the dogma that the essence of the idea is action.

The principle that every mental process or state of mind or idea (it makes no difference for our purposes what name is given it) tends to express itself either mediately or immediately through movement in the organism is, perhaps, well founded. But that this tendency to expression explains anything more than certain elementary structural characters of the idea may very well be questioned. The case is quite clear with the ordinary ideas or mental contents which accompany the simple necessities of action involved in daily life. As I go through the daily round of duties, my conduct is adequately described as a complex series of sense images together with series of muscular movements more or less

appropriate thereto. Here we are on the simple plane of reflex or sensori-motor reaction, and the quality of the sensation constitutes perhaps all the 'consciousness' I have, certainly all I need in this action-context. The same mechanism disposes of the entire life of habit, so long, at least, as habit flows on undisturbed. Similarly, the sensory reports from deep-lying, organic functions touch the key for the discharge of movements in instinct, so that the entire life as organic may be described as nervous and muscular automatism. And in so far as we are content to assume that the entire content of 'mind' is disposed of on the principle of organic automatism, the basis of our psychology, and of the philosophy that depends upon it, is simple and very attractive. But may it not be too simple? It seems that our employment of this assumption would necessarily commit us to the further assumption that the age-long metaphysical problem of the relation of mind and body has been solved, and that an empirical demonstration of the solution can be given. But it is just in this assumption that the difficulty lies. That is, the validity of the assumption rests upon the reality of the problem, which ought to be avoided if the principles of the philosophy of action are to be consistently followed. A problem set for us in immediate, empirical fact is dodged by uncritically accepting the identity of its two terms. In the face of the facts and of their concreteness and disparateness, we assume that mind is essentially nothing but functionings in the organism.

The question takes on sharp outlines when we employ actionist presuppositions in the description of certain types of mental facts. It can, of course, be objected that description does not require any presuppositions, and the objection is valid, if and after we have accepted the attitude that presuppositions (that is, ideas which are not immediately identifiable with organic response) are not involved in the mental life at all, but that that life is merely organic. But even a superficial examination of the images involved in perception and memory will set out in clear contrast to each other two characters, both of which seem to be root-elements



of the image. If Bergson has meant anything in the discussion of current psychological problems, it certainly is that mental facts are not as simple as they have seemed. On this point Bergson has been led to adopt a position that might be characterized as radically empirical, in spite of the fact that the rationalism inherent in his modes of thought spoils much of his discussion by trying to join together what God hath put asunder. Note for a moment his handling of the facts of perception. In the experience of immediate fact the unique factor is that an object offers a clue to the organism upon which the latter is to react in some way advantageous to itself. Presented fact is either useful or not, and the gist of perception is disclosed in the choice which the body makes among prefigured modes of reaction; the reaction not chosen degenerates in the situation in a way which renders it merely 'virtual.' This virtual action is the pure perception and is distinguished from actual perception by the fact that the latter passes off reflexly through the organism. Because the latter is immediately accounted for in terms of organic response, no consciousness in the strict sense is involved, and we have merely the case of automatic adaptation between one 'real image' and another, the unique element being simply the fact that one of the images is privileged. But in case the adaptation does not take place in this immediate and automatic fashion, when there is a hitch between stimulus and response, the action originally meant by the stimulus, that is, the real content of the object presented as this meaning, is seen from the point of view of the real situation to become precipitated or 'prefigured' as virtual action. It is then, it would seem, act as viewed from the side of its representative or cognitive function, the idea of the logicians. Thus the attempt to force the duplicity of fact into the simple form of an outward act, regarded as homogeneous throughout, defeats its own end by showing clearly the contrary fact, that the image invariably presents two faces, the one being the motor tendency to reproduce its object, the other the representative function of intending or meaning its object. And Bergson's laborious analysis makes it fairly

evident that the image can never be so simple as not to consist of both. Further, his method of reaching simplicity here is significant, and possibly illustrates all methods having similar purposes, that is, one of the aspects of the image is found to be merely 'theoretical.' But this looks like neglecting a fact because it does not behave as theory requires.

Clearly, then, although the assumption is that action is the only element involved in any real situation, that same element seems to split itself into two very different parts, the one being the action as a fluent and living relation between real things,—an act which occurs and in occurring actually creates,—the other fulfilling its function by merely 'meaning' an action which is deferred. But being deferred means that it does not occur, and failing to occur means that it does not express itself through the organism. Thus the crux of the matter for a psychologized logic is just the fact that the break between the neural or physical conditions on the one side, and the act which is to modify that set of conditions on the other, is the slip betwixt the cup and the lip. And while most idealistic schemes have thinly covered the breach with assumptions, and have beclouded it with fine-spun logical trivialities, the best that modern actionists seem able to do is to bridge the gap with a hypothetical contact mystified under the name of synapse, thus trading one mystery for another. For the synapse is now a physical or neural connection, now a poetic or energetic 'as if.' It is *as if* two liquids were separated by a membrane of rather high degree of impermeability. And the result is that continuity of action between the organism and its environment, which was established in the first place by assumption, now requires a second supposition,—and one of rather doubtful probability,—to render its position secure. But when we have to bolster up one presupposition by another, by what compulsion are we obliged to stop with two? It would be far simpler to take the common sense view that an act is an indivisible unity, which, as unity, *can* have whatever functions or characters it has in fact, and that it requires none

of the ingenuity of psychological atomism to 'establish' its simplicity. Bergson's purpose seems to be to show that the depths of ontology, which are included, of course, within the profundities of epistemology, are fathomed when knowledge of the act leads us to the vision of duration and futurity. But it is just this vision that many of us do not survive. And yet "how goodly had the vision been." For, when action is thus caught on the wing, it vouches for its existence in another form, viz., that in which it does not act, but simply represents. While the latter as pure perception exists only theoretically, its import becomes significant as a troublesome negative limitation to the out-reaching ambition of the form which exists practically. That is, its theoretic persistence posits the whole field of reality as cognitive and interpretative, and as not requiring in any sense the urgencies of mechanistic energies as a final guarantee of its right to reality. And this means that a static world of representation is, after all, behind Bergson's attempt to create a world of pure functional reals. The same dualism of psychological reals persists throughout Bergson's work, and the problems it presents give him occasion for most of the significant insights which that work offers for modern thought. We have seen that perception is, on the one side, pure act as prevention, and, on the other, act as carried through to response. Memory shows the two forms as pure memory and habit-memory. And although the pure forms are 'only theoretical,' yet it is apparent that his thought would not hold together for a moment, if they were not given equal status with the practical forms of experience. It seems clear that not every aspect of experience is necessarily included in the notion of action.

If we should consider the most potent factors in the thought of the present, it would become more and more evident that the emphasis is in every field upon the dynamic and living, rather than upon the eternal verities of an older type of thought. And by dynamic and living we do not mean the spiritual impulsions of a life assumed to be made up essentially of comfortable accomplishments and close-



fitting realizations, but rather the ruder and cruder life which embodies insatiable urgencies arising from the necessities imposed upon the organism by a world of like structure. The home of the spirit is to be found and founded in the flesh, and the life of the spirit is to be saved to the flesh. Philosophy glories in the fact that it is of the earth earthy. It may be worth while to note some of the many directions in which this motive is finding expression. And first, remembering that the spirit of the modern age is scientific and positivist, one would naturally expect that science would show the first and fundamental postulate of the modern mind in the principle that matter is to be defined in terms of energy. The old atom of homogeneous stuff is displaced by the new center of forces, and the latter receives definition in terms of mathematical relations, which, in their turn, seem to be exchanging their old-fashioned stability and 'universality' for functional relations to their 'conditions,' which conditions are, once more, functional intersections of other dynamic lines of force. Logic follows suit by regarding the hypothetical judgment, once conceived, perhaps, as foundation and superstructure, as representative of a course of evolutionary progress, and the fact that little seems to have been accomplished in the way of developing the conception may merely argue the truth of the generally accepted dogma that logic must await the realization of definiteness in scientific method. And just now the scientific method seems fairly to wallow in insurgent fluidity with its consequent indefiniteness. Action, movement, change,—these are the categories that are fundamental everywhere.

But the interest in change is temporal and practical and human. It is, then, in the fields of the practical interests that we may expect to find the most interesting attempts to apply the principles of actionist philosophy; at least, it is for those interests that most of our philosophers show special concern. It might seem a rather precarious procedure to undertake to incorporate the uncertainties of changing fact into the instrument whose function it is to find definiteness (however low a degree) in the very inwardness of the facts

themselves. And yet that seems to be what is attempted, and results so far do not look reassuring. That is, a logic of change has perhaps not yet been worked out,—the ‘logic of evolution’ to the contrary notwithstanding,—and it may be that the very notion of ordered knowledge within an experience of fluent fact is what Hobbes called a ‘metaphorical speech.’ If one accepts a philosophy or logic of change, one is committed to the acceptance also of a world which consists of other things than facts, a world in which anything becoming another thing is a serious problem. For under this condition the idea as act becomes a cause which may upset the world of fact at any point or at any moment. The act becomes free, its effects unpredictable, thus contravening the very scientific method which called it into being. And this difficulty is only avoided by reflecting that, while an act of creative power, the idea is also a represented value.

The philosophy whose theoretical form we are here attempting to state may be summarized thus. The idea is an act and nothing else; and further, the act which is the idea is the action or movement involved in the functioning of the organism. Then every situation which has hitherto been erroneously supposed one in which we should think ourselves straight and then ‘give the thought his act’ is really a situation in which an act of ours is included as an element in a larger functional whole, this inclusion being the essence of consciousness and the process of thought. Yet thought may, after the act is completed, dwell on the question whether the act was successful with reference to other possible acts, possible acts having reference to alternatives of action distinguishable in the situation as a whole. That is, consciousness is reflexive rather than reflective. Thought is then co-terminous with the physical and physiological processes of movement, these processes being charged with the further capacity for *post mortem* examination of the relations between the situation which they constitute and other situations of the same sort. Life is action; thought or consciousness is useful, that is, real, in so far as it renders action successful; that is, it *is* successful action. Successful

action is that which issues in proper conditions of further action. But action may embody and fulfill the finer needs (avoiding the term purposes) of the æsthetic and religious experience, as well as the coarser and commoner needs of the organism.

There is much that is satisfying and attractive about such a scheme, and most persons will find little difficulty in accepting it,—so far as it goes and with the proper restrictions and limitations. And if belief in idealism (for which the above is supposed to be an antidote) ever involved the conception of the life-process as a complacent contemplation of consummate truth, then idealists should ask pardon for their sins. There are, however, two parts to this creed, and these will not permit of being confused without serious consequences. Nor will they permit of over-emphasis on either part without destroying the balance of forces which represents the truth of the creed. The two clauses are that life is action, either as (1) the act of critical estimation or evaluation, as for example in æsthetic or logical experience, or as (2) the act of the organism in accomplishing results which condition its further action, that is, results in what are ordinarily called material things.

An emphasis upon either of these two tenets which carries with it neglect of the other is fatal to any well-ordered social or individual life, and as a social order of individual lives is the highest of conceivable human ends, undue emphasis in either direction entails a misunderstanding of human motives and a confusion of the meaning of the term practical. As a case of overworking the first of the principles might be named any of the ancient or modern logical idealisms which stand out so attractively in the history of philosophy. As poetic schemes of pure values known in placid contemplation, they issue in the ideal of a timeless, universal Garden of Eden, such as appears again and again from Plato's *Republic* to Wells's *New Worlds for Old*. These have been real in so far as they have stimulated men's minds to try to work them out in the flesh. But their notorious falsity 'on the whole' is well exemplified in the actual history of the New Jeru-



salem, the supposed 'reality' of which has drugged with overdoses of 'hope and trust' the spirit that should have accomplished a good human state, expecting thus to conquer by waiting and through inaction deferring to the timeless a human ideal which should have been operative here and now. There has been further confusion by compounding this idealistic view with scientific atomism, in the hope of saving the individual from the *mêlée* occasioned by the attempt to get things together *überhaupt*. An idealism saved over from the period of mediæval universalism runs hopelessly together with modern scientific atomism, and the result is the absurd confusion of economic individualism in practical affairs and the hopeless effort to identify the individual with the universal by sheer force of logic. And when the outcome of the attempt is accepted as a principle of philosophy, any and all morality seems to be rendered impracticable thereby.

But if, on a basis of the philosophy of the pure thought-act, we come to grief in mere contemplative appreciation, the issues of the opposite point of view are worse. Action being accepted as the basis of the reality of life, emphasis comes to be laid on the mere gaining of results, without taking the trouble to inquire whether our results are of any consequence. Indeed, the only criterion imposed by our actionist principle upon any result is that it serve as a condition for further results, which in turn are judged by the same standard. Hence the apotheosis of 'process' and 'tendency' in theoretical affairs, and the Mammonism of 'getting things done' in practice. The weaknesses of the philosophy of evolution and the indefiniteness of its categories probably find their roots here. A full discussion of these weaknesses would sooner or later implicate the principles and practices of scientific method itself, but that lies outside our present purpose. On the other hand, a scheme which looks for justification to practical consequences should welcome an analysis of some of the interests within which practical consequences are the desideratum. Let us therefore look at some of the current motives involved in our more important practical disciplines, with a view to seeing

their relations to the prevailing direction of present-day thought, thus briefly suggesting what the application of actionist philosophy to the interests of education, politics, and ethics brings forth as its more weighty practical consequences. Even at the risk of overstepping the bounds of philosophy, we may attempt to disclose the 'business' motives which actionist principles seem to make dominant everywhere. One begins to suspect that the degree to which 'practical' interests dominate the present social and political situation constitutes the *reductio ad absurdum* of the philosophy of action.

A superficial glance at current educational tendencies is perhaps conducive to hopefulness. Many movements seem to be indicative of an approaching democracy hitherto not conceivable. We hear proclaimed in nearly every educational address the principles of democratic or universal education laid down in the governmental schemes established by our fathers. Educational journals are filled with the same sentiment. The interest in education is declared to be wide and popular. There was never a time when well-trained persons were in such demand. Even business is supposed to require persons of largeness of mind and roundness of character. The 'people' are clamorous for education. And if our notions of education were determined by current discussion, we would be obliged to conclude that the American people have risen as one man and declared that education is the panacea for all the ills of life. No doubt there is a fundamental faith in education, even a belief that it constitutes for us an only hope; but there is no corresponding degree of intelligence in our attempts to understand what the process means. And in our zeal for education we are ready to 'do' anything except to try to think clearly. Many things are done already, so many, it may be, that a generation of clear-headedness will have to pass before we shall see that many of the same things will require to be undone. Briefly, the notion of what is involved in education as a process and as an accomplishment has recently changed; but it seems never to have occurred to our experts that the

change may be for the worse. Since the initiation of the elective system there has steadily been growing up the conviction that anything which may happen to interest the individual provides satisfactory matter for the educational process. But a little critical analysis of this principle would have shown that it rests upon a questionable sensationalistic or rather impressionistic psychology, and further, that it implies that the standard for education rests upon the caprice of the person to be educated, rather than upon the judgment of the person who is educated. It is he that is sick that is to be the physician. In practice, therefore, since the child is fundamentally active rather than thoughtful, his interest demands that the process be adapted to things he can do. Consequently the curriculum must be made over, first, in the interest of laboratory science at the expense of languages and the so-called cultural subjects, and secondly, in the interests of the 'practical' at the expense of the knowledge-aspects of the sciences. First Latin, Greek, etc., had to give way to physics, chemistry, etc.; and as for the rest, the sciences themselves soon were superseded by vocational subjects; now we have 'shop-work.' A list of the 'practical' subjects now occupying a place in the curriculum is enough to fill with dismay and despair the mind of any one not committed entirely to commercialized materialism. It can be confidently asserted that a large majority of those engaged in the actual work of teaching are skeptical of the results obtainable in these subjects. And while it is sincerely hoped that sooner or later serious permanent results may be obtained from these interests, the intelligence required to direct them to that end does not now exist in the minds either of the experts or of the business men who (actionists all) are jointly responsible for their incorporation in the school system. But things are done nevertheless; also pell-mell. From the point of view of the philosophy of action the situation begins to look like this: Practical men, discerning that the older education based on ideas and committed to the belief that significant results must involve ideas, see that results in this form are not immediately



practical, not convertible into cash. They cannot be converted into things of value,—value meaning what can be represented by economic activity. For them, to learn is to do; to do is to make; to make is to produce the conditions of further action; in short, the educative process is the commercial process. To prove the point our experts commit the fallacy of converting, "The commercial process is educative," into "The educative process is commercial."

A similar arraignment must be made of practical politics. It would perhaps be contrary to every American tradition to ask that a legislator be prepared with ideas, or that he should defend his action by appealing to ideas. The only requirement is that he get results, these being usually in the form of 'pork' or of a shave in the tax-rate. The latter result may be obtained (however unjustly) by shifting the burden from the constituency to the shoulders of a section or class unable to defend itself by reason of numerical or commercial weakness or of ignorance. No questions of the right constitution of the social order seem to be worthy of consideration, but each problem that arises must be settled with reference only to immediate material results. Aside from the possibility of dollars and cents to be made either for the legislator or for the constituency, the next and perhaps most important consideration is the influence of a vote on the likelihood of re-election. Again, the ideal is to do things, or to get or have things done. That considerations of a purely speculative or, so far as immediate consequences go, impractical character might contribute after all to the accomplishment of results more satisfactory, even from the material point of view, than mere dependence upon methods and processes, is a principle whose statement will evoke only merriment from our practical men of affairs. Once more the emphasis is placed upon action to the utter neglect of ideas or principles. Thought is necessary; yes, but only to distinguish methods, never ends. Thinking is doing, or perhaps better, getting things done.

It is, however, in the interest of morality that this criticism of actionist principles is undertaken. Under these principles

the conscious life is identified with, or involved in, the complex of physical or physiological conditions which constitute a situation of fact. Ethics is then a purely descriptive science, hypothesis itself being a descriptive process; all questions are questions of fact. Morality is that life which knows, or rather senses, or perhaps better still, tends to reproduce, its relations to its evolutionary conditions, its *mores*. The *mores* are a set of conditions which determine both the processes and the results of present action. Causation is the moral law. Whatever is, is right; morality is custom, and "It is being done" is the last word. Yet this scheme of activity is offered as a substitute for older idealistic schemes on the ground that the latter furnish no room for spontaneity; that the life of humanity is tied up hard and fast in a system perfected from the beginning. The older views can offer, it is asserted, nothing as possible in new and significant and creative activity which was not contained already in a world bound tight by systems of immutable law. There can happen nothing which was not implied in reality from everlasting to everlasting. When something occurs, it is but a rendering explicit what already incorrigibly and completely was implicit and given. And much fine sport has accrued from the sorry predicament of something which 'is' but still is not 'given.' But an act described as implied in the complex of ideas which make up the character of a conscious individual is no more predetermined than the same act described as a tendency in hypothetical nervous connections in the organism, or as tendencies in the social group. That the idealistic language refers to fact immediately open to common sense is evident by the moral response (we are appealing to the actionist's principle of significant action) which it elicits from a very wide diversity of persons to whom the mere scientific argument will mean nothing. In other words, that a given course of action is the normal outcome of the presence of a given set of ideas probably means more (in terms of behavior even) than to say that the course of action had its conditions in *mores* or causes apostrophically described as tendencies to act. But the actionist or be-

haviorist will probably insist that he has never meant what is here attributed to him. Then what has he meant?

After all, from the moral point of view, what is the difference whether you conceive your world as fixed and transfixed by relations which hold together systems of ideas, or as bound up and determined by natural laws which knit together complexes of facts and tendencies to movement? As a criticism of the idealism which gets lost in a maze of contactless relations, the call for a return to facts is *à propos*; but when facts have no meaning except what they can surreptitiously obtain from fictions, one begins strongly to suspect that the criticism is merely negative and skeptical. Likewise it may not be altogether out of place to suggest that the skeptical critic is either consciously or unconsciously replacing his own ideas with hypothetical entities, such as, for example, the potential energy of the physicist. In any case, a 'fact' is as easily represented by the idea of relation as by a tendency to movement; it is as simple to explain potential energy, considered as the fact that certain consequences will result when certain conditions are fulfilled, by referring the situation to the purpose which may reach the consequence through fulfilling the conditions, as by describing the consequences and conditions after the event has occurred. And apart from considerations of simplicity, the demand that the ideas be made functions in real situations is met already when we assume purposes as elementary to the situations, whereas the 'epistemological' difficulties so much flouted of late have to be met only when we begin with the 'facts,' which we tend to regard as independent ultimates. There seems to be, then, logically, no advantage which either of these points of view can claim over the other; one justifies itself by reference to certain typical characters of experience, the other by reference to other characters; and each type seems as 'real' as the other.

To cover this logical *impasse* the philosophers of action take refuge in the practical, in much the same way and perhaps for the same reason that some, possibly all, types of idealism resort to the contemplative. The practical means,



so far as any statement yet produced is concerned, the attainment of results through action of the type which is to be found in "the concrete, living experience of every-day life." Thought-action involved in scientific research is of this type; in fact, all processes of thought or experience are fundamentally identical in this form, in so far at least as they can attain to this form. The only theoretical considerations which seem to be necessary are involved in seeing merely that a given process is true to type, that it conforms to the condition-activity-result standard. Conformity of a given process or fact with this standard is truth. Failure to conform is falsity, but is yet fact, so error is real. Thought is practical, or better, is practice, action. Its interest is not in results as ends, for results are of consequence only as conditions of further action. Reality is the complex within which the common factor is the movement of thought (and this is organic with physiological movement) or what may become thought,—the apotheosis of process.

It will be readily admitted, I think, that such a scheme corresponds closely to the facts of actual life. The 'thought' process here described is a fairly faithful account of what actually takes place in the world, of what actually is done. It has probably represented the dominant human attitude of the past century, perhaps also of the preceding century. It is certainly the attitude of scientific interests throughout the entire modern period, and the tremendous advances in natural science are due to it. The accomplishments of man in political history are results of a method of thought or an attitude which could be properly described in the same way. The English political method being taken as typical (and we must remember that it is perhaps to the English that the greatest advances in scientific thought are due), that method has consisted in the reference of present action to past results in the interest of new results of the same kind,—precedent. The development of America materially and politically has followed the same course, in spite of some idealism which, in an unguarded moment of enthusiasm, crept into the original governmental scheme. There is no end of the illustrative

proofs which might be adduced to show that the method of human success is trial and error.

But what has been the *total* result? Have we after all, granting that philosophy is interested in life, attained to a life that we can unreservedly call worthy or significant? Have we not, if we look at the matter from the point of view of actual practice, failed to reach a 'life,' in the sense in which every person demands life, but have succeeded merely in expressing a blind will to succeed? It may be very strongly suspected that in the enthusiasm for getting things done we have substituted for the truth-values and appreciation-values that make up the content of life a system of abstract method-values and thing-values which furnish merely the conditions of living, not well, but anyhow. And our suggestion made above that a wrong emphasis here is fatal, now seems to convict us of having committed ourselves to a life of material or economic determinism, in which the thought-life is a mere instrument for the accomplishment of external results. It would be hardly to the point to argue that such a consequence is not meant by explaining thought in terms of action, or to insist that thought-action is restricted to solving real problems on the higher planes of vital activity, while insisting continually that philosophy must keep in touch with actual life. In this case actual life must be the test of our thought-system, and the life that we find actual is one which, practically, is determined by principles unworthy of any serious effort of thought. Nor is this a merely temporal or personal pessimistic judgment. The present industrial system with its methods is generally recognized to represent the life-scheme of practically every individual, whether the individual is aware of the fact or condemns the system or not. And this system, although it fulfills the requirements of a life modelled after the principles laid down by a philosophy of action, stands condemned as unworthy of a human life by every person who can think at all. It would be simple to explain the great war in terms of conditions and results in the complex of life-action, but can the life that is wasted be explained in terms of war-

action? At a certain point explanation must become justification; and it is hard to get justification out of a mere complex of impersonal situations. It is admitted, then, that our philosophy must be based upon life. But a reference of philosophic thought to actual life, without any consideration of its unrealized possibilities, only condemns the mode of life and the philosophy that is found to agree with it. And a continual emphasis on the practical will never supply the checks necessary to keep the life-movement on the upward trend. What has perhaps actually happened is that we have been so drugged by continued material success through mere doing that we have at last attempted to accept the ethics of modern industry as a principle for a universal philosophy; we have accepted the philosophy of *a* life for a philosophy of life. And just now, in the welter of world murder and in the living death imposed by the industrial system, life is paying the forfeit.

No doubt a new philosophy is at present required. But it cannot be one which expresses no more than life as it is, but must show that what is, contains suggestions of new directions of worth. And things of worth (except economically) are not discovered or produced through action alone, but rather through emphasis on critical reflection after action has laid down the bases of life. It is only upon correction of action that *life* can begin. At least, corrective reflection is a fair substitute for that bumptious strenuosity which follows the placing of emphasis upon action. Maybe we shall all be willing to accept the philosophy of doing, when men are thereby shown how to act *as men* and not simply as instruments in that specific unhuman or inhuman situation which happens to exist and to catch men's fancy, or which may artificially and in the interest of gross material results be constructed with the purpose to take advantage of human weakness. We may then come to the point of asserting the truth of the principle that thought is action. But there are acts *and* acts. And the qualitative differences between acts make all the *real* differences in the world, although they may be only differences in degree. That thought is action



does not entitle us to say without qualification that action is thought, as undoubtedly is the tendency in discussions of the practical. The production of material results through organic response, or the resolution of unsatisfactory inner situations, however real such situations may be, are not the only types of action that are significant in life. Much of the thought-action which furnishes the content of an intelligent life has no immediate reference to overt action, and possibly in most cases *when* the act is being performed, there is no immediate or remote intention of producing results outside of the present consciousness. And much of the thought that has been responsible for past human achievement has been obliged to lie dormant as value until future situations arose in which it might become practical. This means that thought may and does determine the situations in which it is to be useful, and while it may have grown out of previous situations, its contact neither with those situations nor with the situations in which it is to be useful is known to it when the thought-act is accomplished. Thought is then often an end in itself, so far as its own act is concerned, and this is true in spite of the fact that it may turn out to be useful. That it may turn out to be useful is evidence of further thought. Granting that all thought is sooner or later useful and has connection with practical situations, it still may be argued that those situations are not consciously involved in the thought process while it is going on. But this is one of the cases where appeal to the unconscious will settle all difficulties. And the settlement on these terms looks very much like a refusal to recognize any problem. The tendency to refuse to recognize problems is often shown by those who argue most strenuously for the problematical character of all thought.

This argument, it must be confessed, begins to savor too much of old-fashioned 'reason.' What we are after, it is insisted, is to force reason to make room for other forms of experience like feeling and will. As directed against a conception of reason which makes it act like an efficient cause to produce results ideally out of nothing; as against a reason

that permeates the whole of what is, reducing what is to eternal rationality; as against reason which is regarded as anything else than the life-process in the individual human being, the criticism is accepted as valid. But to many persons it has not occurred to make of reason anything other than reflection held as dominant in the life-process of the individual. It is not necessary to think of it as separated from the life-process and somehow eternally hostile to it. It may be said frankly that there is no 'reason' any more than there is a principle of synderesis. Still it may be allowable to use the term to designate what is most characteristic in the life-process, even if that function should turn out to be on occasion 'irrational,' as it doubtless often does. In any case we have no right to impose on that function the obligation to guarantee results, even at the expense of subverting the world, as we do when we insist that since reason ordinarily functions in an orderly way, it must therefore guarantee a world rationalized throughout as a product of original design.

But if we remember that by reason we mean simply the fact that memory and imagination *function together* in the life-process of the individual, the difficulties mentioned above will be met by anticipation. By memory and imagination we mean no mythical entities or powers or faculties, but simply the fact that the past is envisaged and the future is constructed. Recalling further the factors that furnish the content for both processes, it will be clear that there is no single aspect of life that is not represented in 'reason' as we now understand it. Memory is largely the feeling that accompanies and characterizes the recognition of 'action' implied in spatial and temporal relations experienced previously, and in connection with imagination these feelings function as plans in further action designed to accomplish a satisfaction or fulfill a purpose. Thus memory cannot be described without involving the imagination, and the description of imagination involves memory. And the two processes taken together constitute the one invariable element within the life-process. This common element has

been inadequately described, and, under the name of 'cognition,' has been represented as a free cause, but that does not argue away the fact that what is better called recognition is a factor common to all experience that is significant or that may become significant.

It thus seems that 'intellectualism' in some sense or in some degree is unavoidable, and the problem is to find the sense in which, and the degree to which, the principle of reason will stand emphasis. That it has been over-emphasized in the past is shown by the criticisms for which empiricism has forced recognition. A more or less satisfactory balance has, however, been reached between the intellectualists and the empiricists, and the problem now seems to be whether further concessions must be made on the part of reason in the interest of action. The point of view of this essay is that already the impulse to do in practical affairs has been over-worked as an epistemological motive, and what is necessary now is that the attempt should be made to think out a proper balance and harmony in the present chaos of life-processes. A philosophy of action, particularly in the degenerate form of efficiency philosophy now employed to displace ethics as the science of practice, may work satisfactorily as a principle in business where men are things or parts of machines; but in education and politics and ethics where men are, or hope to be, men, something is yet to be learned from the doctrine of 'pure ideas.'



## SOME PRACTICAL SUBSTITUTES FOR THINKING

HARVEY GATES TOWNSEND

DEFINITIONS of judgment have been taken out of the mouths of metaphysicians and logicians and so transformed by biology and psychology that considerable imagination is required before we can get back to a common understanding. The older logicians discussed judgment in terms of form and content. Under the first head formal logic has flourished in the schools for many centuries; under the second, advanced logical and metaphysical speculation (sometimes called epistemology) has been the greatest single motive in modern philosophy, at least since the days of Kant. The great philosophical question has been, Is a judgment true? It seems that this question obtains its fascination by appealing to disinterested motives: the love of truth for its own sake, the desire to know, the hope of satisfying the ultimate questions of the human mind regarding truth, beauty, and goodness. It is a question concerning the real world and also concerning our knowledge of the real world.

With the ascendancy of the biological sciences, however, new categories have taken the place of the old ones and the meaning of judgment has been transformed before our very eyes. The omnivorous dogma of the survival of the fit has consumed the distinctions formerly supposed to exist between man and his fellow creatures. The quasi-theological phrases of our fathers representing man as a creature able to know the reality of things and to share divine purposes have been replaced by the new estimate of man as a 'psycho-physical organism.' This means that whatever a man does is to be understood and interpreted no longer by reference to his supposed destiny, but rather by reference to his recorded past. If he shaves, stands with his back to the wall, wears clothes, associates with his fellow men, makes war, establishes gov-

ernments, strives to be reasonable, hopes for heaven, or saves a child at the cost of his own life, it is perforce because these acts have survival value and not because he judges them to be worthy. In fact his judgment itself is but another unconscious means of survival. More broadly speaking, mind, the archetype of judgment, is transformed into a function of cellular matter, developed in the struggle for existence and preserved automatically by its survival value. "Biologists," says Hobhouse, "may be careful to eschew metaphysics and may avoid the charge of materialism by a judicious selection of phrases. None the less it lies in the nature of the biological treatment to think of mental activity like all activity, like muscular contraction or glandular secretion, like respiration or digestion, as the function of a structure."<sup>1</sup> Mind has thus become an instrument of the body.

In such an intellectual atmosphere the old question, Is a judgment true? seems strangely unmeaning, or if it still has meaning, it is at least treated as unimportant. By a little shuffling in the definition of the word *true*, however, it may be made the equivalent of *useful*, whereupon the question becomes transformed into one which the biologist will understand and accept. The coin of this realm is life, and the way to test a judgment is to find out how much life it will buy. In such calculations the dominant consideration is quantity, and qualitative distinctions seem irrelevant. Even though this interpretation of judgment is not wholly satisfactory, it is not my purpose to deplore the interpretation but to understand it and to point out its practical bearings. The most obvious result of this view of judgment is to fasten attention on the function of judgment as a means to a further end and to obscure, perhaps all but obliterate, the value of judgment as a process and an end in itself. It is as if one who set out to achieve the reasonable life had come to seek life first with reason only as a means thereto.

Before self-consciousness became a myth, some persons, after a debauch of introspection, used to testify that a deep

<sup>1</sup> *Development and Purpose*, p. 8.

and lasting satisfaction was to be derived from thinking for oneself. On its psychological side thinking has in it something akin to the instinct of possession. To be able to say truly, 'I think,' is to take a long step forward in self-respect. The desire for the possession of ideas is as keen as the desire for the possession of things. Whoever has seen the comprehensive smile of a child who has learned to do something for himself need not rely upon his own experience to be convinced that self-activity brings rich satisfactions, irrespective of the results of that activity. Psychologically the process of thinking brings the permanent satisfactions of self-knowledge and self-control and may in so far be rated as a good in itself.

But the psychological significance of thinking cannot be long separated from its ethical or political significance. At this point, at least, thinking seems to be primarily an end rather than a means to some further and external end. In spite of the prevailing utilitarianism of British ethical theory, the older dictum of Kant, that nothing is good except the good will, still carries conviction to plain people because it is based upon a very common and homely experience. This experience may be called the experience of personal responsibility, as distinguished from another experience which we may call the experience of observing the results of overt action. The latter experience may be temporarily abstracted from the former. That is to say, the person may take the attitude of an impartial spectator. Whether the act be his own or another's, the effect of the act works itself out in the same terms. Morality on this plane is capable of scientific generalization and control. Personal responsibility need hardly be mentioned. The experience of personal responsibility, however, is more immediate and more concrete. It is more immediate in the sense that it is an unanalysed idea developed without the machinery of science or scientific method. It is closer to feeling and æsthetic appreciation than it is to logic or technique. It is concrete because it is completely, although not explicitly, bound up with the objective aspect of moral action. If we start with the mass feeling of guilt or of essential goodness, we can



easily and must necessarily raise the issue of causes, results, and connections. If, on the other hand, we start with the mechanism of morals, we may be permanently caught within it and see no need of escape. We get into an infinite regress which will never carry us beyond itself. Thus, a judge, except for court traditions, might examine the overt act of a criminal without reference to the criminal. In case he looks upon the accused as a link in a chain of social unpleasantnesses rather than as a person, he might even go further and sentence the criminal without reference to the criminal.

Perhaps modern legal procedure tends in the direction of dehumanizing morality. No one can tell where it will lead. The other view,—that of personal responsibility,—is usually associated with our religious or theological heritage. It starts from the assumption that “all other values are relative to value for, of, or in a person.”<sup>1</sup> From this point of view a person is not a ‘psycho-physical organism’ but a judging, unitary center of value. It seems, moreover, quite absurd to leave out the word *judging* in such a formula. To leave it out would look in the wrong direction to discover the center of value. Without reference to personal judgment value becomes a mere pawn or symbol. Like our currency, it must be secured somewhere for its face value. Like our currency, also, it is secured in the last analysis in the intangible region of faith, good will, and personal responsibility.

The indefinite multiplication of such centers of value has been taken to be the goal of democratic institutions. This multiplication, however, cannot be directly secured by increasing the birth rate, or lowering the death rate, or avoiding devastation and war, or increasing the product of factories. It can be secured, if at all, by the hard and inefficient road of trial and error for each person or generation of persons. To be sure, the trial and error need not be about the same details of mastery, but trial and error there must be wherever persons are to exist. This is a symbol of the perpetual struggle of mind to master the conditions of its lasting satisfaction. Judgment, even for the biologist, functions

<sup>1</sup> Green, *Prolegomena*, § 184.

only in contact with the new and untried present. Biology declares that judgment was developed in the face of a rapidly shifting and hostile environment. The creatures other than man who for any reason live in a static environment have no need for judgment or thinking. Man, however, with his easy locomotion and versatility on land and water, must have perished but for his wits. It is upon this capacity of man that ethical value rests. If this statement is not true of all ethical value, it certainly is true of the first kind mentioned above, that is, the personal kind of morality. This is the ideal of freedom running through all philosophy from the Greeks to our own day, the freedom of autonomous action. Autonomous action is nothing but action accompanied by conscious purpose made more and more free as complete awareness of the whole situation is approached. With this view of morality must go a faith in the ultimate unity of wills, a faith that as many persons become more self-conscious and more intelligent they will become more harmonious and unified. This is the hope of a democracy, but it is also the despair of a democracy. The way to such a goal seems infinitely slow and uncertain. The goal itself may be a mirage. Every generation and every individual at some time despairs of this goal, or, what amounts to the same thing, conceives the idea of a short cut to the desired haven, a royal road to human felicity. This is the attitude that has led to the substitution of other mental processes for thinking. It is the purpose of this paper to point out some of the substitutes at present offered as panaceas for social evil and to suggest in what respect they attempt to avoid the issues implied in the foregoing statement of the nature of judgment.

The reader of educational discussion must have been impressed with the great frequency of reference to habit-formation as the chief aim of the common school. The contention does not always appear in just this form. Sometimes it comes under the guise of drill and sometimes under the name of vocational training. One does not have to take Rousseau too literally when he says, "The only habit which

a child should be allowed to form is that of forming none,"<sup>1</sup> in order to grasp the essential truth which such an extreme statement conveys. Rousseau's theory in this is democratic or it is nothing. We are to understand that he considers habit a poor substitute for that creative, personal activity which he calls nature. Wherever there is an uncritical demand that the school prepare its pupils to fit into the industrial or economic *status quo*, there is involved the issue of habit *versus* thinking. This fact is often vaguely discerned and as a consequence ineffectively attacked. Aside from individual differences, all systems of industrial or vocational training in the common schools seek to develop the skill demanded by industry and practical economic conditions. The school is supposed to look forward to discover the environment of the pupil and then to set itself the task of fitting the pupil for the environment; in doing this the school neglects not only and perhaps least of all the right of an individual to his own mature judgment in the matter, but it neglects the incalculable and unpredictable nature of a changing environment. We are solemnly told that country schools, for instance, should confine their efforts to the training of farm hands, yet the imagination is not unable to see the farmer's child in a radically different environment during his mature life. The teacher sets himself up to think for the pupil and to crystallize his thought in the pupil in the form of skill or habit. When teachers get a little wiser, they may think so well that the rest of the people will not have to think at all. The antidote for this school theory is to teach the pupil, whether in city or country, to think and judge and will for himself. That is all very well, say the advocates of vocational training, but how shall we accomplish this idealistic aim without danger to society? The answer must be that it cannot be accomplished without danger to society. Give to each the tools of knowledge and let him use them as and when and how he will, so that life for him and for us all is then an adventure rather than a prearranged, 'safety-first' affair.

<sup>1</sup> *Emile*, Bk. I.



I would not be understood to say that thinking cannot be developed along with and through vocational training, but it is important to recognize the development of thinking as the aim and not the means of vocational training. As suggested above, Rousseau's epigram cannot be taken literally. No one in his senses pretends that education can function without habit, but we are perfectly sure that habits can and do function without education. No habit is good enough to be a perpetual substitute for thinking. And this is precisely because habit is thinking—dead. It is thinking petrified by contact with a static environment. When the environment changes, habit becomes an evil positively interfering with the good of the organism. But this is not all; biology and ethics go this far together. Ethics may now insist that there is value in the freedom of new and living thinking quite apart from its service in saving the biological organism. The question is not, Does it preserve life? but, Does it make life worth preserving? We might make the habit perpetually effective, but only at the cost of making life perpetually the same. The inner experience of growth and action could not be known. In a word, all the pragmatic results of thinking might be secured in an individual through habit without securing one moment of valuable existence.

Another substitute for thinking may be presented under the head of social control. The study of psychology, for instance, has made it possible for a leader to relieve his followers of all thinking. The same result that may be secured by the aristocracy of military control may also be secured by the more subtile control of suggestion. The soldier who puts on the uniform puts off the right and eventually the ability to think. If he thinks, one of two things will happen: he will either be put in command or in the guard house. The former positions are rigidly limited; the latter are potentially infinite. It is, therefore, the rule that thinking is uncalled for. Democratic society may congratulate itself if it has escaped the evils of militarism, for those evils are the negation of the aim of democracy. However this may be, the psychology of social control offers a practical substitute for military control.

In fact, military force is only an early and particularly gross form of social control.

It is immaterial that in the long run social control may defeat its primary intention. An advertising manager is hired to sell goods by means of suggestion and plausible assertion. Advertising may indirectly affect the character of the product, but in the first instance it has nothing to do with the thing it advertises. Its purpose is to turn some people into money in order to satisfy the aims of some other people. In so far as this is true, it is fundamentally averse to the development of individual thinkers and thus may be said to run, superficially at least, counter to the aim of democracy. Like habit, social control is offered as a substitute for thinking. The difference between the two is that habit indicates the presence of thinking at some time in the individual who uses the habit, while social control is the thought of one individual imposed from without upon another.

The case of advertising serves as an illustration of all forms of social control. A certain kind of sociologist is pathetically concerned in securing the results of his thinking for other people. His generosity may be conceded without admitting that he serves anybody well but himself. He desires to think for others because he supposes that thinking is of instrumental value and worth whatever it will buy, rather than a process of spiritual evolution, of value only to the person of the spirit. Many social reforms fall upon society as dead weights crushing out the real life of the spirit because they are not the product of spiritual travail in the persons for whom they are intended. Indeed, they are not intended by those to whom they are applied. Any social control that stops short of intelligent co-operation is a failure. It may get the result of thinking, but unless it gets also the process of thinking, it is only a mill-stone hung about the neck.

Another growing means of suppressing the growth and vigor of thinking is the cult of the expert. It seems that the world needs a periodical demonstration of the fallibility of the expert. In these times it has taken the form of the ridiculous pronunciamientos of famous scholars regarding

world issues. It is not enough merely to say that they have ventured out of the field in which they are expert. The fault inheres in the nature of expert knowledge, for how else can expert knowledge be defined than by using the trappings of dogmatism? It has been said,—with how much truth I do not pretend to know,—that the mantle of dogmatism is slipping from the shoulders of the priest and resting upon the shoulders of the scientist. If such a position offends by its obscurantism, judgment should not be passed lightly until the characteristic manner of science has been recalled. What science is presented without recourse to “it was once supposed but we now know”? Or, the “opinion” of others is contrasted with the “truth” of science. The demand is made that those who are expert should be given complete control of public or institutional programs, and much amusement is had over the notion of a grocer or a teamster on the school committee. But why? The implicit answer is that a grocer is just a grocer and nothing more. The presumption is also that members of school boards must be members of school boards and nothing more. This is a characteristic assumption of the expert and is contrary to some rather broad human points of view. Even if we should grant that a person expert in school administration would make a better school committeeman, which may be doubted, still there is a large question unanswered. It is, Suppose the grocer is to be just a grocer, and the carpenter just a carpenter, and so on with all the rest, must it not lead to a static condition of society in which each is less than himself because he is not more? This is the paradox which the expert seems never to grasp. Thinking is a process, not a result.

To those who read only the best and greatest science the above description will seem more like a caricature than a portrait. It is in fact not the great scientist who loses touch with reality in developing his power of analysis. I am speaking of the expert and his follower and with this purpose only in mind: to suggest that expert knowledge is a shield of ignorance and a substitute for judgment. Probably the expert is not more to be blamed for this attitude than the rest of us,



for even otherwise sensible people who possess a bit of knowledge soon begin to treat it as a finality. This is involved in the distinction which we make between thinking and knowing. The *expert* is the one who knows and knows that he knows. Such an attitude is dogmatism and dogmatism of the most fatal variety. Dogmatism is about the most common substitute for thinking and is the bitterest enemy of democratic government. It matters very little whether it takes the form of the idols of the theater or the idols of science, for scientific truth is just like any other truth: as soon as it is accepted it must be revised. It is this process of revision which I have spoken of as judgment or thinking, which has worth independent of its pragmatic product.

A typical outcropping of the cult of the expert has been naïvely expressed by a recent writer in the discussion of academic freedom. The expert usually stops in his theory with the praise of expert farmers, mechanics, tradesmen, and statesmen, but this writer bluntly tells us that "it is a decree of human nature, a principle ever more emphasized by the growing intensity and complexity of modern society, that a few should do the thinking for the many."<sup>1</sup> At a somewhat later point in his discussion he expresses the logic of his own position in the remark, "The goal [of democracy] must be a social order in which equality of opportunity is made the instrument for assuring a dynamic, progressive society based upon socially valuable inequalities."<sup>2</sup> A better statement could hardly be made of the theory that thinking has instrumental and merely instrumental value. But democracy requires a theory that thinking is of value as a goal, not as a mere means to a goal. If experts are to do our thinking for us, they would be put into exclusive possession of the only valuable existence. It is possible to show that practical evils would flow from turning over the thinking to the few, largely because the few who think also desire, but it is not to the present purpose.

Thinking is theoretically and practically the hardest and most unpleasant task that the natural adult faces. Bio-

<sup>1</sup> *School and Society*, Vol. III, 1917, p. 625.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 629.

logically it means lack of adjustment and danger. The course of least resistance must be abandoned for the good of the organism when it is confronted with a new situation. It has been the purpose of this paper to set forth one or two common experiences from this point of view and to suggest in what manner the substitute will never quite serve for the original. If an individual is face to face with a situation that demands thought, he will at first try to escape. He may say, I have thought (habit) or, Another has thought for me (dogmatism). The situation will answer, That does not count; you must think for yourself now. There is even, therefore, a biological necessity for individual thinking, but in the realm of biology the value involved is mere life and might be secured by habit or by expert knowledge; or, if these two could not save life, the loss would be slight. In ethics and politics, however, the value involved is a way of life, and in this case to offer a substitute for thinking is to lose all that one has to lose. In the first field one loses only if the habit or information fails; in the second field one loses whether the substitute fails or succeeds.

Under the influence of biological science we have gradually come to think of judgment as a mere means of survival and this theory has led directly and surely to the conclusion that, if we can get the result without the hard discipline of thinking, we make a good bargain. When this is taken together with the suppression of consciousness in psychology and the decadence of individual responsibility before the law, it is no wonder that mechanical efficiency is judged to be more worthy than personal expansion and intellectual development.

## SELFHOOD

EMIL CARL WILM

SINCE Hume's justly celebrated discussion of the self, many efforts have been made to render the theory of the self more articulate and to place it upon a broader basis of empirical fact. If the results appear disproportionate to the length of the discussion and the prominence of the participants in it, one reason for this is doubtless that there has been little agreement either as to the precise objects under discussion, or as to the methods competent for the solution of the problems at issue. The mooted question of the prevalence of self-consciousness in experience, one phase only of the general self-problem, is a case in point. "Das: Ich denke," wrote Kant, "muss alle meine Vorstellungen begleiten können." This view, which in recent discussions is emphatically expressed by Professor Calkins and other psychologists of standing, meets with a flat denial from other writers equally skilled in introspection and equally accredited spokesmen of modern psychology. "All consciousness," asserts Professor Calkins, "is self-consciousness, that is, one never is conscious at all without an awareness, however vague, confused, unanalyzed, and unexpressed, of oneself-being-conscious."<sup>1</sup> Again, "always in being conscious I am aware not only of myself but of other-than-self (either personal or impersonal)."<sup>2</sup> This view is rejected by James, on the other hand, as "a perfectly wanton assumption." "As well might I contend that I cannot dream without dreaming that I dream, swear without swearing that I swear, deny

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. V, 1908, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XVII, 1908, p. 274, and in other places. The position is of course more sweeping than Kant's, who treated the omnipresence of consciousness as only potential.



without denying that I deny, as maintain that I cannot know without knowing that I know. I may have either acquaintance-with, or knowledge-about, an object O without thinking about myself at all.”<sup>1</sup> Equally emphatic is the rejection of the omnipresence theory on the part of Professor Titchener: “It is often said, in the psychological text-books, that a conscious self forms the permanent background of consciousness, and that we have but to direct our attention to this background, to bring the self to full realisation. The statement is made so frequently and so dogmatically that the author inclines to suspect the existence of individual differences. It may be that some minds are cast, so to say, in a personal mould, and that others are relatively impersonal. In the author’s experience, the conscious self, while it may always be constructed by a voluntary effort, is of comparatively rare occurrence.”<sup>2</sup>

The real reason, however, for the fundamental disagreement (I venture to think) is not so much the existence of individual differences, although these doubtless prevail, as the fact that in the discussion of selfhood, as in so many other philosophical debates, there is usually little pretense of agreement as to the definitions of the terms employed in the discussion. Self is a broad and loose term, and it would seem a matter of the first importance, in any consideration of the subject, to indicate in advance just what meaning a writer intends when he uses the term. This meaning will at the outset have to be somewhat arbitrarily chosen and may in the end prove indefensible; but whether it is defensible or not could never be shown, unless it is first understood. It will be the attempt of the present paper (1) to restate somewhat systematically certain distinctions which have been generally recognized by those who have dealt with the self-problem, and (2) in the light of these distinctions to reconsider briefly in what sense, if any, the self exists.

According to a time-honored view, deeply imbedded in

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> *A Text-Book of Psychology*, p. 544. See also the same author’s excellent discussion of the subject in his *A Beginner’s Psychology*, Ch. XII.

the language of common sense and elaborately articulated in philosophy, experience is bipolar in its constitution. It contains within itself the double aspect of knower and known. There is the empirical self, the content or object side of consciousness, composed of so-called states or processes of consciousness like perceptions, memories, emotions, and conative experiences, and the subject, the transcendental self in the Kantian terminology, which is aware of these experiences, to whom these experiences, in some sense, belong. The structure of the empirical self is usually represented as discrete. As Hume expressed it in the oft-quoted passage, it is "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement." This view of the empirical self is of the largest historical importance, since it forms the presupposition of nearly all the discussion of the self since Hume's day. Writers have either regarded the self's contents as permanently discrete, with all the consequences which this view entails, or else have expended their efforts in devising something to provide the systematic connection within the self which was originally lacking, to weld, as it were, the sundered elements of experience and make out of them a rational whole.

The discussion since Hume has largely centered around the question of the transcendental self, around the question whether the existence of the self as knower, understood to be a permanent entity of some sort, other than any transitory process or content within the conscious stream itself, is scientifically defensible. It is at this point that a fundamental divergence of opinion as to the methods which are fruitful in such discussions has made itself most severely felt, and a difference of findings is probably inevitable so long as no initial agreement on methodological principles exists. One group of writers, following Hume, recognizes only the immediately given; their appeal is to 'facts' revealed to observation, which are to be described and explained, all explanation, in turn, being in terms of the conscious stream itself. Another group of writers is convinced that the

experiences immediately given find their adequate explanation only in entities or principles which lie outside immediate experience, entities which can be reached only by a process of logical inference. That anything more than an advance in the solution of the problem under discussion is to be expected, even if the disputants could be forced to some common methodological basis, is probably too much to hope, in view of the fact that, even where such a common basis appears to exist, serious differences of opinion remain. The fact is, that, so far from finding agreement in results among those holding similar methodological points of view, we find four distinct positions maintained by writers of standing. There are those who recognize the self as a permanent entity, existing over and above the discrete ideas and functions which are said to compose the stream of consciousness, as an object of immediate experience (Calkins);<sup>1</sup> another group of writers disclaims an immediate experience of such an entity, and does not regard extra-psychological considerations as admissible in the discussion (Titchener); a third class of writers agrees that a separate self fitting the traditional description of the transcendental self is logically implied by the facts of experience, or is required as an explanatory principle (the Neo-Kantians); and, finally, there is a fourth class of writers who, although admitting the scientific status of entities logically implied by the data of immediate experience, or required for their explanation, do not recognize the logical necessity of postulating the self's existence (James, Pillsbury).

I shall set down, in what follows, with as much support as the limits of my space permit, a few points which, while in no sense new, may prove useful in dealing with the self-problem.

It seems to me an indefensible position, in the first place, to suggest that psychology is, or must be, presuppositionless, and that it cannot, as a science, admit the existence of any

<sup>1</sup> This seems to be the position of Professor Calkins, but I am not at all confident that I understand her view of the relation of the self to the empirical data of consciousness.



entities which do not come in the guise of presented facts, but are merely explanatory postulates suggested by the presented facts. If this is really the case, psychology stands alone among the sciences in this regard. The method of science, as of philosophy, it seems to me, must be experience and legitimate inference from experience; and I do not think that it would be difficult to show that every psychologist, no matter to what tendency in psychology he adheres, recognizes and employs logical constructions of various types for which only the suggestions are contained in the empirical materials with which he works. The real, as Dr. Bosanquet somewhere says, is what we are obliged to think, and the knowledge of reality which science affords would be immeasurably impoverished if the hypothetical and logical elements which it contains were eliminated from it. If the separate self, therefore, were clearly required by the facts of psychology, I do not see why the self should not be admitted for what it is: not as an experienced fact, as a datum on the same plane with Hume's impressions, but as an explanatory principle without which the observed facts of consciousness would be unintelligible. Its justification would be pragmatic: it would be justified by its success in explaining characteristics of experience which would remain unintelligible without its assumption.

Nevertheless, it would be clearly needless to treat the permanent self as a logical construction, if it proved to be an empirical datum. That it is such a datum is asserted by Professor Calkins, for example, according to whom the self is not only immediately known to exist, but is immediately experienced "as persistent, inclusive, unique, and related." Only as immediately experienced, she adds, have we a right to use these characteristics in describing consciousness.<sup>1</sup>

It seems pertinent to inquire whether such characters as are here enumerated can be data of immediate experience at all. To the present writer it seems as improbable that

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. V, 1908, pp. 64-68. See also the same author's *A First Book in Psychology*, p. 3, and elsewhere.

these characters can be given in immediate experience as that Hume's bundle of perceptions should be a datum of immediate experience. The characteristics which Professor Calkins ascribes to the self, as well as those which Hume ascribes to it, imply a knowledge of the self in its entirety, in some sense; but the history of the self as a whole cannot possibly be an object of immediate experience.<sup>1</sup>

In other passages of Professor Calkins's account, however, the term self does not seem clearly to stand for a separate self, or for a type of activity, as it does in Kant; it appears rather as a generic term, denoting a "complex of ideas, functions, experiences." How one is to reconcile the trait of "inclusiveness," in the sense just defined, with the trait of "uniqueness," as next described by Professor Calkins, is not easy to see. When we "reflect upon" the self (is 'reflect upon' the word?), "we may describe it as a consciousness of a this-which-could-not-be-replaced-by-another. Now we simply are not conscious of ideas and functions as, in this sense, unique. A given self, with a different idea, is still this self," etc.<sup>2</sup> How a self can gain and pay off ideas indefinitely and itself remain unperturbed and unaltered in its essence is perhaps a problem for those versed in the ways of the Absolute. That the empirical self should be able to maintain a consciousness of self-identity after a partial alteration of its contents, owing to the loss of some elements and the acquisition of new ones, is, however, not in the least surprising, when one remembers the enormous scope of the self's history and the comparative unimportance, therefore, of the changes wrought in it by any passing experience. The fact that the consciousness of self-identity does actually become uncertain when the changes in its experience are sufficiently radical and abrupt, or when they affect its more

<sup>1</sup> This is a fact which, when clearly recognized, is seen to invalidate either Hume's theory of the self, as set out in his famous definition, or else his theory that the only valid knowledge is that which originates in impressions.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. V, 1908, p. 66.

characteristic phases, as in the more serious perversions of bodily sensibility, is, I believe, not without significance for our problem. Whatever our decision on this may be, we are safe in asserting that a self which persisted unchanged and unique in spite of its changing ideas, functions, and experiences, if such a self indeed existed, could not possibly be an object of immediate experience. The self, whether regarded as a name for the conscious life-history of the individual or as an entity or function outside of and separate from the stream of individual experience, is surely an ideal construction, a conceptual generalization of which the immediately given experience forms merely the nucleus or core.

By self-consciousness, I conclude, we mean, or ought to mean, merely the felt togetherness, the continuity, of any present experience with the other constituents of the conscious stream. Interpreted in this sense, James's assertion of personal selfhood possesses absolute validity. "It seems as if the elementary psychic fact is not *thought* or *this thought* or *that thought*, but *my thought*, every thought being owned. . . . Every one will recognise this to be true, so long as the existence of something corresponding to the term 'personal mind' is all that is insisted on, without any particular view of its nature being implied. On these terms the personal self rather than the thought might be treated as the immediate datum in psychology. . . . Thoughts connected as we feel them to be connected is what we mean by personal selves."<sup>1</sup> Of the existence of the self, thus interpreted, there cannot be the slightest doubt. In the writer's own introspection, the focal elements of consciousness are merely emphasised phases of a more or less distinct background of marginal experiences, of which the feeling of the body is by far the most frequently recurring constant feature, although this may, in moments of higher attentive concentration, entirely disappear. In addition, there is a large field of other marginal constituents, of which the ideal associations and meanings clustering around the more prominent-appearing perceptual and imaginal structures

<sup>1</sup> *Psychology: Briefer Course*, p. 153.



form ever-present, though constantly shifting, features. In the empirical sense here explained, consciousness and self-consciousness, indeed, turn out to be indistinguishable terms. They are as correlative as perception and apperception, foreground and background, focus and margin. Our answer, then, to the question what the self is, would be that it is a name for the experiences of the individual felt and reflectively conceived as forming in some sense a unity or system; it is the stream of consciousness itself, viewed as coherent and continuous. If an answer were demanded as to some specific or permanent structure within the conscious stream which is the self, I should reply (although reluctantly), the body.<sup>1</sup>

It is the recognition of the continuity and coherence of mental states, just referred to, however, that offers the self-psychologist of the traditional Kantian type the cue for his crowning argument. The native stuff of consciousness, it is said (with what warrant does not always appear), is a chaotic manifold. Now it is the function of the self to remove the heterogeneity, to overcome the discreteness, which primordial experience presents. This is indeed the fundamental view of Kant, according to whom the *Durcheinander*, the natural chaos of sense experience, is ordered and organized through the synthetic activity of intelligence. "Die Verbindung eines Mannigfaltigen," he wrote, "kann überhaupt niemals durch die Sinne in uns kommen. . . . Alle Verbindung ist eine Verstandeshandlung." What is true of the raw material of sense is true of ideas as well. Each idea, too, is distinct from every other, and the recognition of relations, of whatever type, among ideas implies the self as a relating principle or agent. This view, thoroughly domesticated in English philosophy mainly through the influence of Green, is typically expressed in a passage of Lotze's *Metaphysic*: "Any comparison of two ideas, which ends by our finding

<sup>1</sup> If the organic connection between any given mental content and the rest of personal consciousness to which it belongs is definitely recognized, the objections often urged against writers, that they employ terms implying the existence of the self when they deny its existence, are seen to be groundless.

their contents like or unlike, presupposes the absolutely indivisible unity of that which compares them; it must be one and the same thing which first forms the idea of *a*, then that of *b*, and which at the same time is conscious of the nature and extent of the difference between them. . . . And so our whole inner world of thoughts is built up; not as a mere collection of manifold ideas existing with or after one another, but as a world in which these individual members are held together and arranged by the relating activity of this single pervading principle. This then is what we mean by the unity of consciousness; and it is this that we regard as the sufficient ground for assuming an indivisible soul.”<sup>1</sup>

Without delaying to discuss the now partly obsolete conception of Kant, that primitive experience consists of isolated, uncompounded elements which are united into wholes by a subsequent process of mental synthesis, it is perhaps sufficient to point out that, in order for the relations between different contents to appear, it is only necessary that these contents should be assembled into larger units of consciousness in which the contents in question, together with the relations appearing between them, will be comprehended. If the objection is raised that the formation of such larger units would not provide for the permanence of the self, the reply is that this does not necessarily follow and that the objection is, in any case, irrelevant, since the permanence of the self is one of the questions at issue. The permanence of the self, argued from its synthetic function, would under any view be no greater than the range of the objects which it synthesizes; that is, it would be finite and variable. A similar statement would apply to the alleged unity of the self asserted to be implied by its unifying function. Here too we reply that its unity would be merely as great as, but no greater than, the unity belonging to its objects. But its objects always fail of being perfectly systematic. The finite self's world (whatever might be said of the Absolute's) is always in part incoherent.

If, then, the question is asked, Who is the knower? What

<sup>1</sup> Tr. edited by Bosanquet, 2d edition, Vol. II, pp. 170f.

is it that apprehends relations between the parts of a manifold? perhaps the best reply that can be given is in the traditional terms: It is the mind or the self. Only by the self is not now meant some non-empirical principle, forever identical with itself, existing over and above the stream of consciousness, but the concrete stream of consciousness itself. Not only is the self as thus understood the knower; it is the agent in every other mental operation as well. The self, as Professor Pillsbury has well put it, "is all that we are and know, organized, self-unified, and self-identical, a growing vital unity that as a whole is effective in every experience. When it is directed towards the control of action, we know it as will; when choosing from the many stimuli that offer, as attention; when interpreting the stimulus, as perception or judgment; when constructing new forms from old experiences, as reason. But it is the same everywhere, always active, and active in very much the same way in every kind of mental process."<sup>1</sup> That such an empirical knower is, from a scientific point of view, incomparably preferable to the hypothetical self of traditional metaphysics goes without saying, since the problem of explaining how the synthesis of a manifold is effected is by no means lightened, but only aggravated, by invoking a unitary substance placed outside the stream of consciousness, and hence beyond the reach of empirical observation. "The idea of a self or Ego," as Mr. Bradley says, "joining together from the outside the atomic elements, and fastening them together in some miraculous way, not involved in their own nature, is quite indefensible. It would be the addition of one more discrete to the former chaos of discretes, and it would still leave them all discrete. The idea of anything being made wholly from the outside into something else . . . seems in short utterly irrational."<sup>2</sup>

Whether the stream of consciousness itself is capable of bearing the burden placed upon it is a question which cannot be answered by mere assertion, but only by actually demon-

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XVI, 1907, p. 406.

<sup>2</sup> *Mind*, N. S., Vol. IX, 1900, p. 37.



strating this possibility in connection with the various mental functions in turn. The illustrations of the success of psychology in the explanation of the mind's various functions without the hypothesis of the traditional self are found in abundance in every modern psychological text-book. Not only in the literal reinstatements of memory, where the past history of the individual's consciousness is of course of prime importance, but in the more selective functions of attention, perception, association, conception, reasoning, emotion, and action, the controlling influence of experience as a whole is being demonstrated with a constantly increasing completeness and detail. Mental functions formerly assigned to a set of mythical faculties or to a discarnate soul are seen to be the activities or effects of systems of earlier experience which project themselves into the present, determining the further developments of experience at every step.<sup>1</sup> The completion of this work of retrospective explanation must, of course, be viewed as a scientific aspiration rather than as a humanly possible achievement. Nor can the assertion of Professor Pillsbury, that no part of past experience is ever lost or is without a determining influence upon present consciousness or behavior, be viewed as anything more than an hypothesis, the truth of which lies wholly beyond the possibility of scientific determination.

A type of explanation of the self's unity, to which prominence has often been given, is by reference to the existence within the self of characteristic interests and purposes which remain relatively permanent throughout the various mutations which the self otherwise suffers. According to this view, the unity of the self is a teleological unity, like that of a drama or a game of skill, a unity imparted to it by an underlying plan, aim, or interest which the self is striving to realise or fulfill. The two types of explanation, although appearing at first sight to involve different principles, are related to each other as causal and teleological explanation in general. They are hence not contradictory but supplementary.

<sup>1</sup> For a brief summary of the progress of recent psychology in empirical explanations of this sort, see Pillsbury, *loc. cit.*, especially pp. 393-400.

Nevertheless, it must be recognized that, owing to the feeble operation of the conative tendencies represented by the self's current aims and interests, the organization and integration of the inner life remains always at any given time imperfect, to say nothing of the fluctuations of the interests and ideals themselves, incident to maturation and decline, and to the various crises to which the inner life is always exposed. Not only is there at any given time a more or less permanent stratification of the self into systems of different and more or less incompatible interests and aims, but the history of any life is often little more than a succession of different groups of interests and aims, each of which arises only to dissolve and give way to its successors. It may thus easily happen that two stages of a man's life, removed from each other by considerable periods of time, resemble each other less than two parallel stages of different men's lives, so that individual identity would here evidently be little more than a name. The actually verifiable identity of the self, we conclude, no matter from what view it is regarded, is a partial and variable, not an absolute, quantity, which belongs to it in its own right.

A word might be said in conclusion about the bearing of our results on the question of the survival of the self after the disappearance of the body, upon the relation to which, as we have seen, its self-identity so largely depends. But I do not wish to go into the question here, since I have dealt with it somewhat fully elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> beyond the statement that the self's survival, in so far as it does indeed survive the body, will probably depend upon the extent to which it has achieved unity of life through the consistent pursuit of some aim, interest, or plan, and upon the degree to which this aim, interest, or plan coincides with the fundamental purpose of the universe in which the self is to exist. Even this belief,

<sup>1</sup> *The Problem of Religion*, Ch. VI, and *Henri Bergson*, Ch. XVII. There is a particularly valuable discussion of the self and its place in reality as a whole in Professor A. E. Taylor's *Elements of Metaphysics*, from which I have received important suggestions, although I find myself dissenting on some points.

it is seen, implies a conception of the universe which must probably be viewed as an object of faith and hope, rather than of logical demonstration. Nothing finer has been said upon this than by Lotze: We have no other principle for deciding the probability of immortality "beyond this general idealistic conviction, that every created thing will continue, if and so long as its continuance belongs to the meaning of the world; that everything will pass away which had its authorised place only in a transitory phase of the world's course. That this principle admits of no further application in human hands hardly needs to be mentioned. We certainly do not know the merits which may give to one existence a claim to eternity, nor the defects which deny it to others." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Metaphysic*, tr. edited by Bosanquet, Vol. II, p. 182.



## MENTAL ACTIVITY AND CONSCIOUS CONTENT

ROBERT MORRIS OGDEN

THERE exists at the present time a wide range of opinion concerning psychology as a science: its aims, its point of view, its fundamental principles, and its methodology. On one hand, we have structuralists holding more or less consistently to the description and analysis of conscious contents. In order to explain the conscious continuum, a sort of psychical linkage between contents is assumed. This linkage is usually referred to underlying physiological processes in the nervous system. These nervous processes may then be conceived as affording the only real basis for a causal interpretation of mind. Some, however, lay stress upon associative linkage *within* consciousness, even leaning towards a conception of psychical causality distinct from, though possibly still paralleling, the physical causality of nervous processes. Among the more extreme structuralists we find a tacit renunciation of the problems of behavior, of learning, of meaningful interpretation, and the like. The contents of consciousness which appear in such functions are described for themselves alone, while the function itself is relegated to the sphere of the 'practical' and non-scientific.

In some sense as a reaction against the limitations set by a 'pure' psychology which makes the definition of conscious structures its chief or only concern, we have the program of the behaviorist. Realizing that the practical problems must be solved, the behaviorist has proposed a solution in objective terms. These terms are nervous processes in causal sequence. The behaviorist starts from the general assumption of nervous connections mediating between external situations (stimuli) and internal responses (mainly muscular and glandular). His aim, then, is to understand the nature of these connections as laid down in the nervous system at

birth, and as modified through subsequent training, by establishing the causal connection between situations and responses, each of which can be directly analyzed and its effective nature determined.

The limitations which are self-imposed alike in the doctrines of the structuralist and of the behaviorist indicate both the strength and weakness of these respective views. It is not undesirable that one should concern himself with the purely existential in consciousness, in order that he may push his analysis to its furthestmost bounds without ulterior considerations. Neither is it undesirable that one should attempt a study of behavior in terms of nervous processes and connections that are purely objective. But to those who are interested in the question: What is mind for? neither the structuralist nor the behaviorist gives a satisfactory answer. The former does not raise the question of behavior, while the latter, making it his chief concern, neglects conscious participation as in no wise relevant to his problem. Each rejects a functional interpretation of mind, although it is only by *functioning* that mind can possibly be of use.

It is with some of the more general aspects of functional psychology that we are concerned in this paper. The point of view from which the problem is treated is mainly that of the so-called "Würzburg School." As a result of the controversy which arose regarding the existence of imageless contents, the main trend of the investigations of the thought-processes directed by the late Professor Oswald Külpe has been somewhat obscured. From personal conversations with Külpe, I gathered that his chief object was to determine the significance and variety of mental acts and functions. Unfortunately, his career was closed before the experimental foundations of such a program had been completely laid. Among the products of his laboratory, the investigation of Ernst Westphal, "Über Haupt- und Nebenaufgaben bei Reaktionsversuche,"<sup>1</sup> is perhaps the most important contribution to this particular end. Special reference to this

<sup>1</sup> *Arch. f. d. ges. Psychol.*, Vol. XXI, 1911, pp. 219-434.

work is made here because the doctrine of the "stages of consciousness" which Westphal developed has furnished the point of departure for our general theory of mental activity and conscious content.

Taking as his problem the primary and secondary tasks which any situation is likely to suggest, Westphal set about to determine the nature and interplay of such functions. As material he drew a variety of polygons on cards. These were exposed with the aid of a card-changer, and the observer was instructed to determine the number of angles and the longest side. These determinations served, now the one, now the other, as his primary and secondary tasks.

From the introspective reports of his observers, Westphal was able to differentiate the following five "stages" in the solutions of his problems:

1. The result is merely *given* in consciousness. This means that the object representing the solution of the problem, as for instance the contour of the figure, is seen in a clear and definite manner. Yet it is only seen. No conscious relations are established, for the particular point of view of the task is not brought to bear consciously upon the object. The observer reports that "nothing was done with it;" "it was not evaluated;" "no notice was taken of it," and the like.

2. The object is *noted* from the point of view of the task. Nothing is altered in the content. The object is not clearer, at least not necessarily so, yet the point of view afforded by the task is now directed upon it. While the contour was previously quite definite, it is now noted to be straight or curved; it is seen as straight or curved.

3. The object is *potentially known*, though still unformulated and unexpressed. When the task is not too difficult, the stage of noting leads immediately to a potential knowledge of the result. That is, if the contour of the figure has been noted as curved, the observer now knows that it is curved, without, however, being expressly confronted with his knowledge. If a decision was to be reached between a triangle and a square, the observer knows what kind of figure it is without an expressed knowledge of the number of



sides or angles. He knows without naming. He has a kind of knowledge of three-sidedness or four-sidedness, but it is unformulated in his mind. It is not an *actual* but a *potential* knowledge. When the task is too difficult, noting does not always suffice for potential knowledge of the result; the formulation must be completed by another step which may rest directly upon noting, without the mediation of a stage which can be termed potential knowledge.

4. The object is known and formulated (*konstatiert*). The observer experiences here an expressed knowledge of his result. The contour of the figure is determined as curved rather than as straight. The sides which have been seen are determined as being curved sides. Words are not an essential part of this formulation, yet they are usually in readiness for its expression. The definite act of *establishment* is the important factor, though it is somewhat difficult to describe. The observer refers to it as the act of "establishing," "determining," "nailing fast," etc.

5. There is also a lower stage than the first mentioned, at which the result is in no sense achieved, yet data are given from which it may be subsequently obtained (*erschliessbar*). This is inferred from later reproductions and conclusions, which appear to require that a characteristic right angle, or some other detail, has been presented, in order to justify the judgment now reached.

It will be seen that these distinctions bear closely upon the special problem of Westphal's investigation. Although they have a wide range of application, as the author has clearly pointed out, they are not inclusive enough to afford a complete survey of mental functions, since they are limited to the genesis of a special problem-consciousness. The scope of the mind's activity must be wider than this, if only to afford the presentations upon which the problem-consciousness may operate. Accordingly, we shall suggest a revision of Westphal's doctrine to embrace the following three stages: (1) Simple Presentation, (2) Awareness, (3) Cognition.

The first of these stages is analogous to Westphal's fifth, or lowest, stage; yet it is not identical with it. The *erschliess-*

*bar* stage embraces data which, though not acted upon at the time, are nevertheless selected for later activity because of their relevancy to the problem at hand. The data are relevant data, though their relevancy is not at the time 'felt.' The stage of Simple Presentation may embrace such objectively relevant contents, but it also includes others having no connection with the task. These others may be present simply because the sense receptors have been appropriately stimulated, or because the associative mechanism has been operative.

The definition of *presentation* here adopted is nearly that of Stout when he designates the objective facts of "immediate experience" by this term.<sup>1</sup> But when Stout refers to the *function* of presentations "present objects which are not themselves presentations,"<sup>2</sup> and upon this elaborates a doctrine of the direction of thought, our agreement is only partial. According to our view, presentations as such do not function at all. Association is the chief function which may be operative at this stage. No other functioning is implied, though another is possible, as we shall see later. An object when presented opens the way for others not presented, through its associative connections with them. Previously formed associations make possible readiness for revival. The formation of new associations at the stage of Simple Presentation is also probable, though some investigators have concluded that attention is a necessary factor. We need not concern ourselves here with this question, except to remark that many of the mental acts commonly attributed to the 'unconscious mind' seem at least to demand the formation of new associations, if not a more rational type of functioning. Therefore, these acts may occur without conscious awareness.

The stage of Simple Presentation affords a wealth of sensory, imaginal, notional, and affective material, and a diversity of associative connections. It is in a sense hypothetical, because it is not directly subject to observation. At this level a strict differentiation of the physiological and

<sup>1</sup> *Manual of Psychology*, 3d ed., 1913, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

the psychological is impossible. All we can know of it is known indirectly. We assume that the bit of color now clearly within our range of vision was there somehow before we noted its presence, but whether its *thereness* was physical, physiological, or psychological is a matter of hypothesis. Later revival, and modifications of behavior that can be traced to such a source, justify the assumption of actuality for these contents in simple presentation as *mental*, though not necessarily as *conscious* facts.

The second stage of consciousness, which we have called the stage of Awareness, is effected by the action of attention. Attention, as here defined, has the single function of *clarifying* the contents upon which it acts. It is important to note this limitation upon the function of attention. The term has a number of meanings. It is frequently used in so broad a manner that it may embrace awareness of momentary and irrelevant distractions at one extreme and concentrated thought at the other. In the interests of greater precision in the characterization of mental activities, we have purposely renounced all but the narrow function of clarification as being specifically that of attention.

The conditions of attention are varied, and we should describe them much as do other psychologists. Briefly considered, we may say that they are both external and internal to the organism. Externally, changes of stimulation through addition, subtraction, and alteration of stimuli are productive of varying degrees of clearness in conscious contents. Participating reciprocally with these are internal conditions of the physiological and mental state: dispositional traits, congenital and acquired; associative connections; the immediately preceding activities, etc. What we wish to insist upon is that attention, however aroused, has the sole function of rendering the contents upon which it acts vivid and clear. The number of different contents that may emerge simultaneously with varying degrees of clearness is a problem of the 'span of attention,' or more properly the span of awareness. It would appear that several different contents may manifest themselves in this way simultaneously from



out the larger field of Simple Presentation. The field of consciousness is a shifting mass of contents, some few of which emerge into clearness, while the rest constitute a sort of undifferentiated background.

We have called the third and final stage of consciousness Cognition or the consciousness of *knowing*. This stage is achieved by a unique function, the Relating Activity, which is responsible for the *problem* or *task*, bearing upon the data which the mind affords. The selective activity of this function is different from that of attention, since it selects from a "point of view." It groups and unifies into meaningful wholes those contents which have been offered and are found suited to its purpose. All the stages which Westphal differentiates are determined by this functional activity. Even the *erschliessbar* stage, in so far as it selects relevant data because of their relevancy, gives evidence of relational activity, though it be quite unconscious. It should be noted, however, that the relevancy of such contents is at times fortuitous.

A further analysis of relational activity may be undertaken from many different angles. We have already explained Westphal's genesis of the function of interpretation. Ernst Dürr has offered a useful classification of the relations in his revision of Ebbinghaus's *Grundzüge der Psychologie*. Though essentially logical in its form, his consideration appears to be based upon the fundamentally psychological act of relating by comparison. There are, he tells us,<sup>1</sup> four chief types of relation: similarity, difference, equality, and identity. To this list he adds, though he does not develop, a fifth type, *Besonderheit* or particularity. This relation would appear to have a genetic significance by intimating that the first appearance of the relational function is a crude setting-off of contents. The particularizing of parts in wholes is a primitive differentiation without reference to an explicit category. Such particularization is dichotomous, emphasizing the part which is thus set off from all the rest of experience. Though naturally founded upon an act of attention,

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II, p. 278.

particularization is still distinguishable from emergence into clearness. Attention selects and may provoke associative trends, but it does not "set off," for it involves no point of view, however vague. Attention clarifies discrete contents, one or several. To particularize, however, is to group, to assemble, and thus set off a part from all the rest of experience. Out of this primitive function arise the more refined similarities and differences, identities and equalities, which summarize abstractly the bases of our logical categories and systems of knowledge.

Other lists of mental functions, including the relations, are given by many writers, including Stumpf in his paper, "Erscheinungen und psychische Funktionen,"<sup>1</sup> Calkins in her *Introduction to Psychology*,<sup>2</sup> Dunlap in his *System of Psychology*,<sup>3</sup> and Coe in a paper entitled, "A Proposed Classification of Mental Functions."<sup>4</sup> For Stumpf the chief functions are: the noting of 'appearances' and their relations, the combining of contents into complexes, conception, apprehension and judgment, feelings of agitation (*Gemütsbewegungen*), desire and volition. He does not offer this as an exhaustive list, but rather as illustrative of the distinction he is drawing between function and content. Calkins gives a tentative list of the relations, while Dunlap writes: "As examples of relations which are *probably* elementary we may name the following: difference, identity, similarity, greater, less, betweenness, direction (peculiar to space), a relation peculiar to time, agreement, and possibly the relations of good and bad. At any rate, it is difficult to see how these can be resolved into any other relations: but the list is only a suggestion." Coe gives five "biological" and six "preferential" functions. The subdivisions of the first group are: "1. Increase in the spatial range of objects responded to. 2. Increase in the temporal range of objects responded to. 3. Increase in the range of magnitudes to

<sup>1</sup> *Abh. d. kgl. Akad. d. Wiss. z. Berlin*, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> New York, 1st ed., 1901, pp. 130f.

<sup>3</sup> New York, 1912, p. 149.

<sup>4</sup> *Psychological Review*, Vol. XXII, 1915, pp. 87-98.

which response is made. 4. Increase in the range of qualities responded to. 5. Increase in the range of environmental co-ordinations to which co-ordinated responses are made." Those of the second group are: "1. To be conscious. 2. To multiply objects of consciousness. 3. To control objects, oneself included. 4. To unify objects, oneself included. 5. To communicate, that is, have in common. 6. To contemplate."

Each of these lists has its suggestive value, yet none of them tells us very much about the analytic nature of the functions named. If we assume a fundamental impressibility which is, in a way, the function of experiencing *per se* and the occasion of all presentations, then the three additional functions of associating, attending, and relating seem to furnish us with a means of analysing all the more complex activities of mind. For example, let us consider Stumpf's list. His 'noting of appearances' would be the same as our act of attention, while for us relations are not 'noted,' but cognized or known. His 'combination into complexes' would appear to be associative in the main, though it is probable that particularization is also involved. 'Conception' is but the act of relating from a definite and restricted point of view. 'Apprehension' is defined with less certainty, for it may mean presentation, awareness, or cognition. 'Judgment' may be defined as an *expressed* relationship, *i. e.*, one falling within Westphal's fourth stage of consciousness. Functionally, it is hardly to be distinguished from the act of conception, except in so far as the latter involves a more complex series of judgments that are cumulative and thus give rise to the 'concept' which is a general idea. We might similarly distinguish inference as being a series of judgments, not cumulative, but leading to a final judgment. All such logical distinctions are essentially one in the fact that they involve the establishment of more or less subtle relations. The affective and volitional functions which Stumpf adds to his list are somewhat different. Here the æsthetic and the ethical are suggested. Yet it is doubtful if a unique function can be discovered in the acts of will or emotion, in appreciation or desire. The differentia are



more especially due to formulations resting upon the precise contents that enter into the associational, attentional, and relational acts. Affections undoubtedly arise in functional settings, yet we may conclude, tentatively at least, that these arise as affective contents, and not as functions.

Calkins' and Dunlap's lists need not detain us, for they are expressly lists of the relations. Coe's 'biological' functions likewise may be dismissed because we are dealing now with mental rather than with physiological activity. The connection is not so remote, however, as this summary dismissal might suggest. As regards Coe's first two 'preferential' functions, 'to be conscious' and 'to multiply objects of consciousness,' these appear to be embraced by the general function of experiencing *per se* that we have assumed. The third and fourth, 'to control' and 'to unify objects, oneself included,' involve association, attention, and relation in varying degrees which the specific acts alone would indicate. The fifth function, 'communication,' is based upon reflexes and may be to some extent instinctive, yet it involves relational acts manifest at the stage of cognition, since it expresses a formulated knowledge. 'Contemplation,' the sixth of these functions, is also a relational activity. Its uniqueness as experience seems to rest upon a certain *immediacy* of the related contents. Without seeking after points of view or categories to classify with, and without motivating reactions of an adjustive sort, we take the object of contemplation at its face value. It has no ulterior meanings. This implies subtleties of usage, but it hardly proclaims the presence of a unique function.

Although we have done scant justice to many of the suggestions included in these lists, our comment may perhaps serve to indicate that the functions of association, attention, and relation can be applied in a reasonably broad and inclusive manner, without losing their distinction.

Returning to our revised stages of consciousness, it must be admitted that the term "stages," which we carried over from Westphal, is not quite so appropriate in our scheme as it was in his. Westphal's stages are the steps of a progressive

development which may terminate at any one, leaving those above it unattained. In the typical instance this is true of Presentation, Awareness, and Cognition. Many mental objects remain at the level of simple presentation, while a few emerge into attentional clearness, to become, all or part, the subject of further selection by the relating function. One cannot insist, however, that the last two stages must invariably follow in the order named. Westphal has pointed out that the different stages he names are accomplished with varying degrees of attention and that they are quite independent of attention as such. Still, he has not shown that contents which are cognized are ever totally without the range of attention. For evidence of this sort we must turn to explorations in the debatable land of the 'sub-conscious' and the 'unconscious.' Here we find suggestion, if not proof, of a wider range of relational activity than is normally met with. Cases such as those of 'double personality,' where the individual seems able to converse on one theme while writing automatically, yet intelligently, upon another, call for special consideration. Therefore, we shall not deny the possibility of a relational activity of some order immediately upon presentation. More importance attaches to the essential difference in the three functions than to a fixed order of their appearance.

The doctrine of these discrete functions suggests a general interpretation of psychology and is significant for many related disciplines such as education, the normative sciences, and epistemology. For education, concerned as it is with the process of learning and the development of personality and character, it is evident that the functions of association and attention, although of fundamental importance, are yet inadequate. The growth of intelligence rests upon the unique activity of relating. This is the truly creative function of mind. Association and attention are in some measure independent of individual initiative. The mere sequence of conscious events, and of associated acts of behavior, may provide learning of a kind, but it is arbitrary and non-selective. The relating of contents furnishes the sole method of gaining

insight and knowledge. By an appropriate selection of objects and the conditions of their presentation, one can force upon a pupil the acts of association and attention. The relating act is more strictly individual and is much less completely within the control of the instructor. Presentation and awareness condition thought, but thinking, or the establishment of meanings, follows the individual's own initiative. This is why teaching depends so largely upon the art of arousing interest and individual responsiveness. A deal of unsound pedagogy is rooted in the theory that to attend and to associate is all that is necessary in order to know. The case of the imbecile who may be quite proficient in association and attention, yet without the ability to relate cogently, is a striking evidence of the fallacy of this view. Mental tests indicate that individuals of sub-normal intelligence may be able to perform mathematical operations in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division as well as, and sometimes better than, normal individuals of their mental age. But when more concrete problems are set, such as that of determining the amount a farmer receives for 639 bushels of wheat at \$.98 a bushel, they are unable to comprehend the relations.

The normative sciences, logic, ethics, and æsthetics, treat each of a special mode of relationship from a certain point of view.<sup>1</sup> It is likewise through the establishment of relations that the foundations of a theory of knowledge are laid. *Reality* is a product of relational activity. The adequacy of any such concept is determined by the nature of the demand for existential facts to justify relations which the mind establishes.<sup>2</sup>

These brief comments must suffice, in order that we may devote the remainder of our paper to a consideration of the conscious contents upon which the mental functions operate. We may designate the elemental contents as being of four

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the author, *An Introduction to General Psychology*, New York, 1914, pp. 253ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the author, "The Relation of Psychology to Philosophy and Education," *Psychological Review*, Vol. XX, 1913, pp. 186ff.



kinds: sensations, images, affections, and thoughts. Of the first three classes we shall say but little, since all are commonly accepted and their respective characteristics reasonably well known. Association, attention, and relation act upon elements of each of these classes and likewise upon their attributes. The contents of thought demand some special consideration, both because they have been frequently rejected and because they are dependent for their existence upon the function of relation.

The unfavorable reaction which attended the discussion of 'imageless' thought was largely due to the insistence of its critics that these contents should substantiate their claim to existence by direct comparison with the accepted elements, sensation, image, and affection. The criteria advanced by structural psychology, especially those concerning the attributes, were not appropriate for a convincing demonstration. It is upon functional rather than upon structural grounds that the thought contents must be considered. Indeed, but for an explanation of their existence such as is afforded by the doctrine of mental acts of relation, thought contents would have no place in systematic psychology. They are not contents which can be described in terms of extensity or intensity. Their duration is difficult to determine, and while their qualities are unique, they are not subject to a classification such as we can apply to the other elements.<sup>1</sup> The question as to the existence of thought elements resolves itself into the question of a structural *versus* a functional psychology. We must therefore reconsider our foundations before we can justify the acceptance of this new category of conscious contents.

In a purely structural psychology existential qualifications are paramount. In so far as the province of psychology is limited to the existential facts adduced from introspective description and analysis, it is difficult to establish any element save *sensation*. For this reason neither affection nor the image can be said to have won an incontestable place in the scheme of elements. Yet, even though we assume all

<sup>1</sup> Cf. K. Bühler, *Arch. f. d. ges. Psychol.*, Vol. IX, 1907, pp. 315, 361f.

three elements with their respective attributes, and the usual views regarding association, memory, attention, etc., still the interpretation of human action and conduct is incomplete. Realizing this, the behaviorists support their point of view by contending that the results of introspection are not practical. At least, it must be admitted that the basis for an applied psychology receives but scanty consideration in the restricted program of the structuralist. As a result, the interests of many psychologists seem to waver at present between mental tests, on the one hand, and recourse to physiology, on the other. To be of use, mind must function. For those who find the problem of mental activity no less worthy of investigation than the problem of an organism's action-system, the need of a more thorough-going functional psychology than we now possess is quite evident.

The mental functions here advanced as a contribution to the solution of this problem are three in number: Association, Attention, and Relation. The first operates, or may operate, at all stages of consciousness, including even the hypothetical stage of Simple Presentation. The second operates at the stages of Awareness and Cognition, while the third acts typically, though perhaps not exclusively, at the last stage, that of Cognition. By means of association, contents are connected by bonds conditioned through simultaneity or close succession in experience. By means of attention, certain contents emerge into consciousness by reason of the clearness or vividness which is thus attached to them. By means of relation, contents are set off and compared with one another; they are received or rejected as suited or unsuited to the purpose of the problem at hand: in the final step they are formulated and established as meanings.

Strictly speaking, no one of these functions need be described as conscious in order to effect its end. We experience association not so much through a consciousness of the associative bond, as through the facts of revival. Yet associations must have been formed before a revival can take place. Similarly attention is marked by the attributive clearness of

the content rather than by an aspect of consciousness which is itself the act of attention. As for relation, although it occurs typically at a stage of consciousness more accessible to observation, the act of relating need not itself be a conscious act. No mental activity is of necessity a conscious activity. Still, it would be perverse logic to require that relational acts must be unconscious because association and attention are commonly so judged.

But what is the conscious mark of a relating act? It is an element of thought, the consciousness of *relation*. Two straight lines of unequal length may be regarded as differing in length, as like or unlike in direction, or as alike in being straight. These aspects are conscious factors that change as the sensed contents, or their attributes, are variously related. The act of relation may be attended by a unique element of consciousness which is imageless, *i. e.*, non-sensory and non-affective. The doctrine of the 'threshold' may obtain here as it does for sensation. Still the consciousness of the relation is not an *existential* content in the same way in which a sensation is, for it is tied to the contents that are being related. The terms being related constitute its foundation, and the relation *subsists*, as it were, upon these foundations. Relational elements are not independent; they are not 'free' ideas. Yet from them, from the mind's capacity to particularize, then to differentiate from a point of view, then to equate, identify, compare, etc., there gradually evolve the 'free' ideas, the independent, existential meanings which we may term the *notions* of things. From a certain conscious relation of lines comes the notion of length; from others come the notions of direction, straightness, equality, inequality, etc. Notions thus created constitute an additional fund of contents, which in their turn may be acted upon by association, by attention, and by the relating function. In this manner we are enabled to create and enrich our mental furnishings, to enlarge the scope of our ideas, and to bring meaning into what would otherwise be a chaos. Not all relational acts are productive of 'felt' contents. Yet the act of relation conditions such a conscious insight, just



as the act of attention conditions clear contents, and the act of association, among other things, conditions the image.

It is the process of *abstraction* that makes possible the crystallization of the notion from the tied but 'felt' relations. Relational aspects, subsisting in perceptual and ideational complexes, are known and may be nucleated and detached from their settings. We call this abstraction. Possibly it is a unique function, yet such an assumption is hardly necessary. Abstraction may be regarded as an act of relation *whose terms are the conscious relations already subsisting in other relational processes*. In this manner a relation is lifted out of its subsistency and achieves independent existence. It is *abstracted* from its context. As a very simple example, a child is shown an apple and an orange. They are so presented that the likenesses of the two as regards rotundity and edibility are emphasized. A likeness of impression and response is thus 'felt' in noting the two objects. Two relations are established, for each is round and each may be eaten. When, however, the two similarities are compared, the concept or notion of similarity itself may become the object of thought. Rotundity and edibility are based upon quite different sensory contents yet the *likeness* of an apple to an orange in being rotund, and the *likeness* of the same two objects in being edible, can be related and thus coalesce to form one abstract notion of similarity. This example is far too simple. No child gains abstract knowledge so easily. Instead of a single relation of relations, many must be formed before the aspect to be identified can be lifted out of its various concrete settings. Nevertheless, the process of abstraction appears to be given an explanation in some such way as this. If the explanation is satisfactory, abstraction may be placed among the relations, which obviates the necessity of a special category for it.

Introspective evidence for the existence of notions which embody the meanings of past experiences is very strong. Competent observers report an experience of the meaning 'red,' yet they are aware of its image neither as a quality nor as a word. Likewise, they report the presence of such

meanings as straightness, curvedness, direction, length, squareness, roundness, without imagery, pictorial or verbal, and without kinæsthesis. Three-dimensional geometric concepts, points of view, human qualities of goodness, badness, beauty, ugliness, truth, and falsity, all seem to exist in notional form to be operated upon, associated, attended to, and related, as entities equally distinct and independent with those of the sensational and imaginal order.

It is the act of relation that gives meaning, but not necessarily as a conscious content, though this occurs with the 'felt' relation. Meanings of previous formation may be abstracted and revived as notions, thus constituting a further category of thought-elements. As contents, relations *subsist* in the conscious stream, inasmuch as they are always dependent upon other contents between which the relation is established. But notions are truly existential and take their place among the entities of consciousness along with the sensations, the images, and the affections.

Functional psychology may freely accept all the facts a structuralist can demonstrate, as well as all those the behaviorist may adduce. Yet over and above the aims of these investigators, the functionalist proposes a study of mental activity and its bearings both upon conscious content and upon behavior. Much remains to be done before the various functions can be regarded as fixed, or the scope of their influence fully understood. In the course of more detailed experimentation and theoretical consideration, many changes in such a scheme as here offered may be expected. The obvious connection of mental functions with physiological processes calls for a comprehensive examination. We must learn more of the influence of mental acts upon the nature of conscious contents, especially the affections. The bearings of mentality upon behavior are very obscure. All these are problems which we can more readily set than solve. Yet if our proposals but commend themselves as a program for further investigation, we have at least defined our aims. The way is then open for the more detailed and arduous task of determining the precise nature and connection of mental activity and conscious content.

## THE RÔLE OF INTENT IN MENTAL FUNCTIONING

JOHN WALLACE BAIRD

AN important contribution to psychology has resulted from the investigation of the influence which one's purpose or intent or point of view exerts in determining and directing one's mental processes. Numerous investigators have attacked the problem, and their findings agree in testifying to the fact that the intent is of paramount significance in mental functioning. The findings of these investigators undoubtedly bring us nearer to an understanding of the nature and the magnitude of this 'intentional' influence; but they still leave us in doubt as to the details of the mental mechanism by means of which it is exerted and controlled.

The phenomenon is a familiar one, at least in certain of its grosser and more general aspects. Every normal individual finds that he is somehow capable of directing his mental energies, more or less at will, to the solving of any problem which he may choose to attack; he finds, too, that having once selected his problem, he is capable of holding himself tenaciously to his task. He observes, meanwhile, that his mental procedure consists essentially in adhering rigidly to a consistent train of ideas, and that that in turn involves an excluding or banishing of such ideas and ideational trains as are extraneous and irrelevant to his task.

This selective and directive function seems to be an essential characteristic of all mental activity. Its presence and potency are no less evident at the lower levels of observing, learning, and remembering than at the higher levels of abstracting, judging, and reasoning. The reader who sets himself the task of mastering the meaning of an author may become so absorbed in his reading that he wholly fails to notice other stimuli from his environment which, under other conditions, would undoubtedly be observed and noted. He fails to observe misprints and misspelled words in the



text which he is reading. His process of observing is essentially a selective process,—certain stimuli find access to his consciousness while others find that their entrance is barred. This process of selecting takes place under the direction of the task which he has undertaken or the purpose which he has in view. And the directive power of the task may reach such magnitude as to distort one's apprehension of the object to be observed, the distortion being in conformity with the ideational train induced by the task; the reader actually misperceives the misprinted words and apprehends the text as though it were printed in conventional verbal forms. That 'suggestion' and 'expectation' exert an influence upon the process and the product of observing is a commonplace.

If, however, the reader of our illustration should adopt the point of view of the proof-reader, if he should read the text with the intent to discover typographical errors, his change in attitude would bring with it a corresponding change in mental product. On the positive side, he would now detect misprints which formerly escaped his notice; but on the negative side, he would obtain a less definite and detailed knowledge of the author's meaning.

The degree to which one's intent determines what shall be observed and what shall be ignored has been brought to light in various experimental investigations. Myers<sup>1</sup> and others have found that students of average intelligence are wholly unable to recall certain details of familiar objects,—the sizes of coins, bank notes, and postage stamps; the number of steps in a familiar stairway; the number and arrangement of windows in a familiar building; the furnishings of a familiar room, and the like,—the obvious reason being that these details failed to be observed because of a lack of intention to observe them. Myers found, too, that when he exposed a group of letters with the instruction that the O's in the group were to be counted, the observers succeeded in accomplishing this task but failed to observe what other

<sup>1</sup> Garry C. Myers, "A Study in Incidental Memory," *Archives of Psychology*, No. 26, 1913.

letters were present, what was the arrangement of the letters, and what was the color of the background; in short, they observed only that feature of the complex which they had intended to observe, and all of the other features escaped their notice.

Külpe's findings <sup>1</sup> show that the intent to observe may be of a highly differentiated sort; and that each differentiation of intent results in a highly differentiated result of observation. In this investigation, groups of nonsense-syllables were exposed for a brief period of time and various tasks were assigned to the observers. In one case they were instructed to observe how many letters were present; in another case, to observe the general form of the group; in another case, to observe the colors of the letters; in a fourth case, to observe the syllables themselves; while in a fifth case no specific task was assigned. Külpe's results show that that feature of the complex upon which the intent was directed in any case was usually observed with twofold greater accuracy and completeness than were the features which did not fall within the range of the task. For instance, when the observers were assigned the task of noting the colors of the letters, they made a score of sixty per cent correct in the observing of these colors but of only thirty per cent correct in observing how many letters and what syllables were present; when instructed to observe how many letters were present they accomplished this task with a degree of accuracy amounting to sixty-three per cent, but the accuracy of their observation of the colors now dropped to thirty-five per cent. Besides furnishing a quantitative measurement of the significance of these differentiated and artificially imposed intents, Külpe's findings show that when no specific task is assigned, certain features of his complex stimuli were more accurately and more completely observed than other features,—form being most accurately perceived, while number was least accurately perceived. This latter finding indicates that the human individual possesses certain natural

<sup>1</sup> O. Külpe, "Versuche über Abstraktion," *Bericht über den I. Kongress für experimentelle Psychologie*, Leipzig, 1904, pp. 56-68.

or habitual intents and attitudes, or that certain features of a complex situation are inherently more 'interesting' than other features.

The influence of intent is equally significant in the process of learning; and here, too, the intent may be of a highly differentiated sort. That learning cannot be readily accomplished by an individual who does not really intend to learn is shown by an incident reported by Radossawljewitsch.<sup>1</sup> The experiment consisted in exposing a list of nonsense-syllables, the arrangement being that the syllables should be presented over and over again until the learner signalled that he had memorized them. On account of unfamiliarity with the language, one of his observers failed to understand that his task was to consist in learning the syllables. It turned out that, in the absence of an intent to learn, the successive presentations of the series proved to be almost wholly barren of result in the case of this observer; forty-six readings of the syllables under these conditions gave rise to a lesser degree of learning-effect than resulted from ten readings when the intent to learn was present.

Not only, however, must one will to learn, but as numerous investigations have shown, one must will to learn for a particular purpose and in a particular way if the best results are to be achieved. Aall<sup>2</sup> reports a series of experiments in which he presented materials to be learned by six hundred children. In one case he stated that their remembrance would be tested on the following day; in another case he stated that the test would take place after the lapse of several weeks. Instead, however, of following this plan as stated to the children, he deferred the test of all of his learners for a period of a month or more. It turned out that these delayed reproductions were more accurate and more complete in the case where the material had been learned with the intent to remember it for a considerable period.

<sup>1</sup> P. Radossawljewitsch, *Das Behalten und Vergessen bei Kindern und Erwachsenen*, Leipzig, 1907, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> A. Aall, "Ein neues Gedächtnisgesetz?" *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*, Vol. LXVI, 1913, pp. 1-50.



The purpose for which a given act of learning is undertaken may vary between wide limits. In numerous instances data are memorized exclusively for the purpose of immediate recall; in other cases it is the purpose of the learner to acquire a permanent remembrance of the data. When we consult the telephone directory, we ordinarily make no attempt to remember the telephone number permanently; we wish to retain it in memory only long enough to transmit it to the operator, after which we usually forget it forthwith. This type of purely temporary acquisition, for use in the immediate future, is exceedingly frequent, and exceedingly valuable, in our everyday activities; and a characteristic intent or attitude is involved in the process of acquiring data for temporary as opposed to permanent retention.

In writing from dictation the stenographer endeavors to carry the dictated material in mind only long enough to permit of its being transcribed to paper; and Bryan and Harter's study of the acquisition of telegraphy<sup>1</sup> reports that in receiving messages it is the custom of skilled telegraphers to lag behind, since this procedure enables them to get a better survey of the material and hence a clearer apprehension of it, before committing it to paper. It is essential, however, that so soon as the stenographer or the telegrapher transcribes any group of words, he should thereupon forget them and devote his attention to the following group. The phenomenon of temporary retention and subsequent dismissal from memory is a valuable asset here as in numerous other instances. For example, in the answering of questions we seek to retain the question in memory only long enough for our immediate purposes of answering; the student who draws from a model, or the histologist who draws from a microscopic slide, must possess this capacity of temporary retention and immediate reproduction in order to proceed

<sup>1</sup> W. L. Bryan and N. Harter, "Studies in the Physiology and Psychology of the Telegraphic Language," *Psychological Review*, Vol. IV, 1897, pp. 27-53; Vol. VI, 1899, pp. 345-375. See also W. F. Book, "The Psychology of Skill," *University of Montana Publications in Psychology*, Vol. I, 1908.

efficiently with his task. There are numerous instances where maximum efficiency of performance demands that, after delivering an address on a particular topic and upon a particular occasion, the speaker should thereupon forget all about it and turn his attention to other matters; or where the lawyer, after having first saturated himself with all available knowledge regarding a case, and after having then made use of this particular store of knowledge in pleading his case, should promptly forget at least the details in order to devote his mental energies to another case. And it is in consequence of the diversity of learning-intent, with the consequent diversity of learning-effect, that this state of affairs is possible.

These illustrations show that the act of learning may be undertaken for wholly different purposes and that the intent of the learner may vary widely. The degree to which this specialization and differentiation of intent in learning may be carried is shown in numerous investigations of the *Lernprozess*. Investigators in this field have devised a considerable number and variety of methods of testing the effect of learning, and these methods differ widely from one another in nature and in principle. Now it frequently happens in laboratory investigations that, before undertaking his task of learning, the learner inquires what method is to be employed in the subsequent test of his remembrance. The experienced learner has at his command a variety of procedures, and in any given case he tends to employ that procedure in learning which seems most appropriate and economical in view of the nature of the test which will subsequently be employed. Not until he knows what test will be employed does he feel prepared to enter upon his task of learning.

The fact that each differentiation of intent in learning has its own peculiar differentiation of learning-effect has been demonstrated by Meumann.<sup>1</sup> This investigator found that when retention is tested by means of the method of paired

<sup>1</sup> E. Meumann, "Beobachtungen über differenzierte Einstellung bei Gedächtnisversuchen," *Zeitschrift für pädagogische Psychologie*, Vol. XIII, 1912, pp. 456-463.

associates,<sup>1</sup> the experienced learner tends to memorize only the second member of each pair of syllables; he persists in this selective procedure even when he is required to read the material in trochaic rhythm, that is, when in reading the syllables he is obliged to accentuate the initial member of each pair. And it frequently happens that the learner who is able to make a perfect score in the test (that is, who is able to reproduce all of the even-numbered syllables of the series) is wholly unable to reproduce the odd-numbered syllables. It would appear that the learner had here been content to hold the experimenter responsible for the reproducing of the odd-numbered syllables and had devoted himself almost exclusively to the learning of the even-numbered syllables, and that he has done this notwithstanding the fact that in his reading of the syllables he accentuated the odd-numbered members of the series. In other words, the effect of his intent was of such magnitude as to give rise to the paradoxical result that a trochaic learning is accomplished by means of an iambic reading.

Not only, then, is the intent a potent factor in the work of establishing associations between mental contents; its influence is perhaps even more clearly manifested in the subsequent coming into operation of these associations. Associative bonds seldom exist in one-to-one form. In consequence of his many years of experience, an intricate network of associations and inter-associations comes to be established among the various mental contents of every adult. Each datum of experience is associatively connected not with a single other content but with hosts of other contents. And this multiplicity of associative bonds is a desideratum, since it conduces to definiteness of meaning and clearness of understanding. But if the associative mechanism were the sole determinant of mental functioning, as certain psychologists have held, this very complexity of

<sup>1</sup> When the method of paired associates is to be employed, the materials to be learned are presented in pairs; then the test of retention consists in the experimenter's presenting the first member of any pair, the learner being required to reproduce the second member of the pair.



mental associates would result in mental incompetence. The associative bond which at any given moment is most ready to come into operation would inevitably come into operation; and the corresponding idea, however relevant or irrelevant, would thereupon be thrust into consciousness. Then, too, in cases where two or more associative bonds were present in equal or approximately equal strength, they would all tend to come into operation simultaneously; associative inhibition would inevitably result and mental activity would come to a standstill. In the former case, wealth of mental associates would conduce to irrelevance and reintegration; in the latter case it would conduce to a suspension of mental activity.

In view of the multiplicity of mental associates, it is indispensable that, if the mental mechanism is to function efficiently, the process of selecting that associative bond which shall come into operation in any given case shall not be determined by the fortuitous circumstance of greatest associative strength at that particular instant. And as a matter of fact, it is the intent which frees us from the fetters of associative bondage, because it is one's momentary purpose or attitude which determines what selection shall be made from among the numerous mental associates which are available in any given case.

For instance, in the association experiment the experimenter gives the instructions: "I am going to present the name of a country, and you are to respond with the name of its capital;" he then presents the name "England" and the reagent responds with the word "London." In a second case the instructions are: "I am going to present the name of a country, and you are to respond with the name of its most important river;" here, when "England" is presented, the response is "Thames." In a third case the instructions are: "I am going to present the name of a country, and you are to respond with the name of its form of government;" here, on "England" being presented, the response is "Monarchy." In a fourth case the instructions are: "I am going to present the name of a country, and you are to respond with

the name of its most noted dramatist;" here, on "England" being presented, the reagent responds "Shakespeare." And in a fifth case the instructions are: "I am going to present the name of a country, and you are to respond with the name of one of its universities;" here, on "England" being presented, the response is "Oxford." What, now, is the reason why in the first case the reagent reproduced only the word "London" and did not reproduce, or even tend to reproduce, "Thames," or "Monarchy," or "Shakespeare," or "Oxford," in response to the stimulus-word "England?" From the fact that the five response-words are different it is obvious that at least five ideas have become associated, in the mind of the reagent, with the name "England." How are we to explain this fact of selective response,—the fact, namely, that but a single one of the various possible associations came into operation in each case? This remarkable diversity (and appropriateness) of selective response can only be accounted for in terms of the diversified intent, or purpose, or attitude of the reagent; and of the consequent diversity in degree of functional preparedness of the various associative bonds concerned. Moreover, this diversity and appropriateness of selective response seems to represent the type of functioning which is fundamental to all consistent, coherent, and constructive thinking.

But for the influence of this factor, controlled and selective thinking would be impossible. Instead of sticking to his subject the thinker would wander into countless irrelevancies, because he would at every moment be a prey to that association which chanced at that moment to be functionally most efficient. The pathological phenomenon which is known as 'flight of ideas' furnishes an illustration of the rambling which is characteristic of every ideational train which is not directed and guided by an intent. And on the other hand, obsessions illustrate the type of ideational train whose course is determined and directed by a permanently immutable intent.

The mechanism by means of which this 'intentional' influence is exerted and controlled has not yet been sufficiently

investigated. That the phenomenon is volitional in its essential character there can be no doubt; indeed, there seems every reason to identify the intent with a phase of the volitional process, and hence to believe that coherent thinking is at bottom quite as much volitional as it is intellectual. Ach and others have shown that, temporally, the intent belongs to the fore-period,—that is, that its advent is anterior to the process of attacking the problem in hand or attempting to accomplish the task in question. Although Ach has done pioneer service in emphasizing the significance of the *Aufgabe*, he has thrown no light upon its *modus operandi*. Two envisagements of the mechanism have been advocated. Ach conceives that it operates as a *vis a tergo*; others conceive it as a force which attracts from in front rather than as a force which impels from behind. According to Ach, the task which is accepted during the fore-period determines and directs the course of the train of ideas which follows in its wake. According to the view of Aschaffenburg, Meumann, and others, the task exerts its influence in indirect fashion; it gives rise directly to the setting up of a goal-idea, and this in turn attracts the ideational train toward it.

Several genetic stages may be differentiated in the intent. At the outset, at its earliest genetic stage, the intent is initiated by a definite process of volition; and during this stage the intent is clearly and definitely present to consciousness. In the course of time, however, in consequence of its being frequently initiated, its conscious representation becomes gradually more vague and indefinite, until finally it no longer exists as a datum of consciousness. In its later stages, therefore, the presence of the intent can only be inferred from the fact that its results are manifestly present. What was at the outset a volitional and deliberate and conscious intent has now become an habitual attitude or a customary point of view. Yet the functioning at this ultimate stage is no less effective and facile than at any of its earlier stages. In cases of doubt or difficulty, however, where one is confronted by a novel task or an intricate problem, the automatized



and mechanized type of functioning no longer suffices. One's only recourse is to initiate an appropriate intent, and to envisage it in such definitely conscious fashion as shall insure its successful functioning in the novel or intricate situation where selective reaction of a highly complex and differentiated sort is imperative and where automatized and mechanized functioning proves to be ineffective.

It is difficult in the present status of neurological knowledge to envisage the details of a neural mechanism which could serve to make it possible that intent and attitude may be capable of so profoundly influencing (neural and) mental functioning. The phenomena revealed by the complication experiment and by the simple reaction experiment,—the phenomenon, namely, that one may at will bring this or that impression more promptly to consciousness, and the phenomenon that one may at will react either more promptly or more discriminatingly (in muscular or in sensory fashion),—these and other phenomena of analogous character have long since shown us that nerve conduction may be accelerated, retarded, inhibited, diverted, or otherwise modified by purely subjective factors. Hence there is nothing unique in the hypothesis that the mere act of willing, of intending, or of assuming an attitude may somehow serve to throw a synaptic switch into the position which is momentarily appropriate; that by thus setting the switch in any given position one may guide the ideational train in any desired direction; and that in consequence of being repeatedly set in a given position the switch may tend not only to assume that position more readily but also to remain in that position more permanently.

## THE RELATION OF PUNISHMENT TO DISAPPROBATION

THEODORE DE LAGUNA

It is too much to expect from the frankest of physicians that he should give us a candid criticism of the practice of medicine as it exists today. But he has no scruples against telling us how ignorant and often harmful it was a generation or two ago. The profession then still retained a naïve faith in the virtues of various drugs as 'cures' for various diseases, which later investigation has not justified. Outside the profession, indeed, the use of dangerous household remedies and patent medicines prevailed almost unchecked. Our fathers, and even more our grandfathers, were dosed with physic, upon the slightest excuse, to an extent that seems appalling, until it is suggested that the endurance which they displayed is a most convincing evidence of the toughness of our stock. If it could stand that, it can stand pretty nearly anything.

So the genial monitor of our homes now informs us; and he even goes so far as to say that the fewer prescriptions he writes the better he earns his fee. If, then, we turn upon him and ask how, among a civilized and enlightened people, the belief in drugs could so long persist, he answers, first, that no doubt the drugs did sometimes do substantial good; and, secondly, that, as most men would recover from most diseases without medical assistance, they will also generally recover unless the drugs they take are decidedly injurious to them; so that almost any drug can show a handsome percentage of cures. Besides, when a man was sick, to whom could he turn if not to the physician; and to what could the physician turn if not to his drugs? Something, it was felt, had to be done. It was easy, like Molière and Rousseau, to talk against physic; but what could they put in its place?

What the practice of medicine was a generation or two ago, such is punishment as it is administered in our homes and in our penal institutions today. I do not mean to say that punishment is upon the whole a bad thing; and I am far from wishing to suggest its abolition. But it appears to me that it is administered with as little real knowledge of its possible or probable effects as our forebears had of the virtues of the dark-brown doses which they prescribed and swallowed. The situation is precisely analogous. A wrong has been committed and something must be done. You and I were punished when we were young, and behold us now! If we had been punished a little more frequently and severely, perhaps it would have been better for us. The sensible men of old imprisoned and hanged criminals; and society is preserved to us. If they had imprisoned and hanged a few more, so much the more stable our social institutions might be. And, as the physician could always point with impressive effect to the unfortunates who had despised his ministrations and had died in consequence; so the parent and the judge can point to many a culprit who has been spared the lash, and who has grown up in iniquity and social rebellion.

Very curious has been the attitude of moral philosophy toward punishment. Except on the part of a comparatively few radical skeptics, the assumption has been made that punishment is, of course, on the whole efficient in accomplishing its purpose. There has been some disagreement as to whether punishment is good or bad for the individual punished; but its utility to society has been acknowledged without hesitation. The question has been: What is this utility? Why is punishment right? or, at best: On what principles can it be most effectively administered? The philosopher, like the man in the street, has had a faith in punishment altogether comparable to the old-fashioned faith in drugs. The broader question, whether there are not other agencies that can accomplish all or most of what is expected from punishment, and accomplish it with more certainty and with less incidental loss, has not only been generally neglected, but even been set aside as foolish or wicked.



I do not now propose to enter into a discussion of the various theories of punishment. My former pupil, now my colleague, Dr. A. L. Kellogg, is about to publish an important study of that subject; and I could say little or nothing about it that I have not learned from her. I shall take for granted that the rationalistic dogma of a peculiar *a priori* appropriateness of punishment to crime is a delusion; that the juristic theory of deterrence is inadequate, because, except where an indiscriminate 'frightfulness' is practiced, punishment does not effectually deter; that the humanitarian theory of reformation is inadequate, because, generally speaking, punishment has no direct reformatory influence; and that the real value of punishment is, for the most part, as one means among others whereby the sentiment, or attitude, of *respect for authority* is fostered,—by no means always the best means, sometimes useless, sometimes indispensable. As such, I shall assume, punishment does important service in maintaining domestic and civil peace and order, and thus helps to ensure the necessary conditions under which the development of good character takes place. I dare say there will be few readers that will not be willing to concede all this.

But the altered views of the function and value of punishment that are now prevalent among us, suggest an overhauling of our notions of the relation of punishment to moral disapprobation. Is Westermarck, for example, right in maintaining that approbation and disapprobation are essentially *retributive* emotions, belonging thus to the same general class as anger and gratitude, and, in particular, that disapprobation is a species of resentment? And is he, accordingly, further right in maintaining that punishment is simply an overt expression of more or less intense moral disapprobation, the severity of the punishment being in general an index of the intensity of the disapprobation? It appears to me that he is clearly and demonstrably wrong.

1. Students of ethics everywhere are so deeply indebted to Westermarck for the immense array of detailed facts which he has gathered and arranged for their benefit, that to point out a neglected field may well seem ungrateful. The fact

remains that there are wide and important categories of moral ideas which his treatment has left almost entirely untouched; and, if I am not mistaken, his general theory has suffered seriously in consequence.

It is noteworthy, for example, that in his two bulky volumes the virtue of *courage* is only incidentally mentioned. And yet nothing is more characteristic of the morality of a people than their notion of courage. Courage may be recognized in insensibility to pain and danger, in joyous enthusiasm, in confident superiority, in ferocity, in desperation, in grim determination, or in a sweet serenity; and where one sees courage another sees brutishness or fanaticism or even outright cowardice. The Stoic emperor saw no courage in the Christian martyrs. The American soldiers saw no courage in the 'treacherous' Filipinos. German soldiers have gleefully told of their success in using non-combatants as a shield. Was this cowardice?

Similarly, Westermarck has nothing to say in any systematic way with regard to the virtue of *temperance*, though that too has undergone some surprising modifications. It may be indifference to a particular temptation or to the common sources of illicit pleasure. It may be the moderation of good taste. It may be egoistic prudence. It may be the self-denial of extreme asceticism.

He has nothing to say of the virtue of *wisdom*, whether it be the experience and common sense of Nestor, the craft of Ulysses, the political foresight of Solon, the self-analysis of Socrates, or the philosophical insight of Plato,—to choose only a few illustrations from the developing standards of a single people.

2. And now let it be observed that cowardice, intemperance, and folly are generally unpunished. There are, to be sure, conditions under which the punishment follows. Cowardice in battle, for example, when it leads to a distinct dereliction of duty, may be severely punished. But cowardice that does not lead to crime generally goes scot-free, no matter how ignoble it may be. The like is true of intemperance, and, more generally, of all lack of self-control.

Drunkenness is punished when it leads to disorderliness, or when it occurs in a place where the mere exhibition of it is regarded as an infraction of the public order. The soldier who sleeps at his post is shot, not because he lacks self-control, but because he has slept at his post. And it goes without saying that no one is punished simply for being a fool.

It may be added that the moral faults comprehended under the name of 'selfishness' are generally unpunished. Avarice, though it be plainly vicious, is safe so long as it keeps within the law. Lack of public spirit or of love of country is not punished. Even cruelty, though it rouses protective sympathy and anger, is often beyond the range of punitive measures.

These facts may be summed up in the statement that, in general, the only moral standards that are enforced by means of punishment are the standards of *duty*,—not those of virtuous character or of benevolent intention. But it is not even the case that all standards of duty are enforced by punishment. Lying is generally unpunished, even when it is extremely shameful; though perjury is punished very severely. The most shocking disregard of a father's duties is rarely punishable. Inhospitability may be punished by the gods above, but not by men below.

What then is punished? Non-submission to authority; that is to say, disobedience either to the commands of a superior or to the law of the land.

3. It may be objected, that serious breaches of custom are punished, where no law in the proper sense of the term exists. That is true, if 'punishment' is given a sufficiently wide denotation. I do not care to attempt a definition in this place; not because a tenable definition would not be useful, but because an elaborate discussion would be necessary in order to prove its tenability. It is simpler to point to the nature of those primitive practices which may be called 'punishment.' In the first place, revenge exists,—as it does even in certain of the higher animals,—and a crowd, whether of savages or of civilized men, may be at least as



angry and revengeful as an individual. When a whole community is roused to revenge, the action may be difficult to distinguish from a punishment. In the second place, the need for purification from the pollution of guilt, and for the appeasing of offended deities, exists; and because pollution is contagious, and the anger of the gods, too, is liable to attach not simply to the offender but to all who are connected with him, purification and atonement easily become communal concerns. If, then, by washing or burning or exiling a man and his family, a grave danger can be averted from the larger group, the whole group will very naturally take a hand in seeing that this precaution is taken; or, if there are special functionaries entrusted with the magical or religious welfare of the community, these may well take upon themselves the performance of the necessary rites. Such action also may be regarded as punishment, if the means of purification or atonement involve the infliction of pain or loss upon the guilty party.

Apart from such exceptions, the principle which is stated above,—that only non-submission to authority is punished,—is, I believe, generally valid.

4. I should like in this place to make a suggestion with regard to the historical origin of punishment. Does it spring, as has been widely held, from revenge, as appears, for example, in the case of the cessation of the blood-feud? The appearance, I think, is deceptive. Blood-revenge does not grow into punishment. On the contrary, it is suppressed largely by means of punishment, and punishment takes its place. I can find no evidence of any real continuity in the alleged development. Or does punishment arise from rites of purification? Is chastisement, as the Socrates of the *Gorgias* conceived it, essentially a means of freeing the soul from the evil of iniquity? I can urge but little against such a view, except that there is little or nothing to be urged for it. The plain fact, it appears to me, is that *the rise of punishment is part and parcel of the rise of authority*: the authority of chiefs, of heads of households, of gods, and of states. The punishment, by new-born states, of deeds of violence that

have hitherto been held in check only by revenge, is simply a case in point.

If the inquiry be pushed back a step and the origin of authority itself be sought, a partial answer,—perhaps the most significant part of a complete answer,—is that it arises from the increased necessity of co-operation in work. This is, of course, Rousseau's great sociological principle: "Corn and iron have enslaved the human race." Where, for example, children do not work under the direction of their elders, the latter feel little desire to assert authority over them and seldom punish them. Under such circumstances, a parent may, on occasion, get terribly exasperated at his child,—though even this is rare,—and strike him brutally in consequence. But he has, in general, no commands to give him; the child lives his own life, except as he comes to the women for food; and as there is little authority to be enforced, there is little enforcement of it. Similarly, the authority of tribal chiefs is no doubt mainly due to the necessity of effective co-operation in war. It may be limited to periods of actual war. Whether temporary or permanent, it must be actively exerted; and thus punishment is involved.

What, then, is the primitive motive of punishment? The resentment of the superior at not being obeyed. There is no project of reformation. Among people of a low grade of culture there is surely no project of deterrence; that belongs to a reflective theory. On the other hand, the actual effect of punishment is not simply to compel obedience. Obedience may, within a very limited range of conditions, be compelled by torture. But more than this is required; and more than this is in general secured without anything approaching torture; namely, the conscious duty of obedience. The superior punishes because he feels that he ought to have been obeyed. The punishment has the moral support, as well as perhaps the physical support, of the community. And the culprit feels not only the physical blows, but also their significance. To the question, therefore, what the primitive function of punishment is, I would answer: Precisely what its proper function to-day is. It is one of the

agencies through which willing submission to authority is secured.

It is worth notice that in early society there is no specific duty of punishment. It is a right. If the superior wishes to pardon, he does so without committing any injustice; just as, generally speaking, an injured man does no injustice if he fails to revenge himself on his enemy. Such a conception sometimes persists, especially where there is an autocratic government, to an advanced stage of culture. The good-natured caliph, on the occasion of his marriage to a fourth wife, or of the birth to him of an heir to the throne, sets free a multitude of jail-birds; and the people applaud his clemency. Punishment may become a duty through custom. It necessarily becomes so, when the officer who directs it acts as the servant of a God or of an earthly sovereign; and this happens equally when, through reflective thought, punishment comes to be regarded as a means of fulfilling various responsibilities which custom has laid upon husband, parent, master, or sovereign. "Spare the rod, and spoil the child," is, of course, in the first instance, a prudential maxim: if you want children that are worth having you must beat them into form. But let a responsibility for moral education arise, so that the community looks to the parent to "train up a child in the way he should go," and then chastisement is a duty that is owed either to the community or to the family or to the child himself. In this case punishment may go beyond its primitive and normal limits. Since it is supposed to improve the child, any moral fault may be regarded as calling for it: cowardice or meanness, for example. Yet even here, I think, most men would hesitate. It is impossible, they would say, by means of penalties, to make children brave and generous.

Enough has been said, I think, to show that punishment is not essentially an expression of moral disapprobation as such. There are important classes of adverse moral judgments that seldom issue in punishment; and when punishment is inflicted it is not, as a rule, for a moral offense *simpliciter*, but for insubordination.



5. What, then, shall we say of the attitude of moral disapprobation itself? Is it one of hostility or resentment? Undoubtedly it may be; but also undoubtedly it need not be, and generally is not. An exhibition of cowardice arouses contempt, in extreme cases even loathing. The coward is jeered at; men shrink from contact with him, as if he were of some despised lower race. But of resentment there is none, unless on the ground of particular offenses into which his cowardice has led him. The like is true of the intemperate man and of the fool. And the like is also true of the offender against many of the standards of duty. To be caught in a lie is a shame and disgrace. That is enough, perhaps; but, at any rate, it is all,—unless, indeed, the lie is itself a means of further injustice or a case of insubordination. Even where the offense against duty is one that distinctly calls for punishment, it by no means follows that in all who condemn the fault there is a feeling of resentment against the culprit.

The phenomena of self-condemnation are here of especial significance. When the moral sentiments are regarded as essentially retributive, their direction toward the self is necessarily conceived as a secondary development. Now I would not deny that states occur which may fairly be described as moral resentment against oneself; for example, the feeling that one ought to be severely punished, not because punishment is a good, but because one has deserved ill. Under such circumstances a man may proceed to impose a penalty upon himself very much as a stern judge might do. But surely this is not the usual type of self-condemnation. As the attitude toward another is less often one of resentment than one of contempt, so the attitude toward oneself is far less often one of self-antagonism than one of *shame*.

It may be urged that anger and resentment are older than contempt and shame. And doubtless so they are; but they are all older than morality. The moral sentiments in their development were thus quite as free to grow upon the latter stock as upon the former. And there is indirect evidence to show that moral contempt and shame are at least as old as

moral resentment. Neither the civilized man nor the savage passes moral judgments upon anyone whom he does not credit with a capacity of passing moral judgments upon himself. The self-judgment, therefore, can hardly be regarded as a secondary outgrowth of the judgment upon another. The two have most assuredly developed together.

The application of the foregoing remarks to moral approbation is obvious.

## FUNCTIONAL INTERPRETATIONS OF RELIGION: A CRITIQUE

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To characterize modern thought and civilization as scientific is to imply that the dominating interest is fundamentally practical. For even where the concern is not with invention and machinery, with a search for methods in the direct interests of control, or with the utilization of scientific laws in the achievement of human purposes, the orientation of the scientific is towards the practical. This fact, it is true, is one of which the devotee of so-called 'pure science' is sometimes unaware. He may, indeed, repel as an affront the claim that his efforts, beyond those of all other men perhaps, are directed fundamentally and constantly by the demands of human life upon the physical and the social environment. But if there is one thing which history and logic substantiate, and upon which widely differing philosophical schools may agree, it is the fact that the underlying motives determinant of the presuppositions, the methods, and the problems of modern science are essentially, even if not exclusively, practical. If, therefore, the life of to-day is correctly apprehended by those who characterize it as scientific, if our social experience is constructed of the results of science and is permeated by its spirit, we need not be surprised to learn that the central values and the religion of the age focus on achievement.

Relatively unfettered by firmly established tradition and stimulated by the opportunities of a new and a richly endowed land, it is Americans especially among whom this impulse for achievement is paramount. In this country particularly would assent be spontaneously given to a psychology which dethrones intellect and gives the place of pre-eminence in human experience to volition. Not that the



displacement of rational psychologies by voluntaristic interpretations was conditioned by the peculiar temper of modern interests or of American life. The latter merely give what seems the clear and distinct ring of genuineness to a psychology whose immediate springs are to be found elsewhere.

The influence of comparative psychology, the analysis of the mental development of the individual and the race, various experimental investigations, the phenomena of abnormality, and interpretation of social actions,—all have conspired to shift the psychological emphasis from ideas, theories, and cognition generally, to impulses, instincts, desires, habits, emotional dispositions, and valuational attitudes. Supplementing the factors that have brought about this change were potent influences emerging from evolutionary conceptions and, more particularly, from biology itself. In certain instances these latter influences were far indeed from being merely auxiliary. On the contrary, they asserted a dominance, subordinating to themselves such tractable facts and conclusions as otherwise appeared, and giving their own particular stamp to voluntarism as a whole. Under these conditions the emphasis came to be placed almost exclusively upon the practical. The mental life lost its status of relative independence and primacy. It was dispossessed of any ends or problems of its own setting and regarded as an expression of the life-principle of physiological organisms. Not merely was conation believed to be the fundamental characteristic and capacity of the human individual, but conation,—indeed, mental life as a whole,—was interpreted as “an instrument of adaptation by which the organism adjusts itself to the environment.”<sup>1</sup> Not

<sup>1</sup> Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 15. It is this general principle that Ames adopts as the basis of his account of religious experience. Four facts, however, should be noted with reference to Ames's standpoint: (1) Mind is also described as more specific in function, namely, as “the means by which adaptations occur in novel and complex situations” (p. 15). The limitation of mind's function to novel and complex situations, however, is obviously unwarranted if, as Ames does, we include within the concept ‘mind’ instinctive processes (*cf.* p. 16), as well as desire, habit, and emotion (*cf.* p. 303). (2) No one view is consistently

merely were appreciative and valuating attitudes given a priority over cognitive interests, but they were held to originate in, and to derive their sole significance from, the stresses and strains, the embarrassments and the difficulties, attending the demands of the life-process upon a more or less foreign and refractory environment.<sup>1</sup> The psychologist, King tells us, "should attempt to treat the acts and states of consciousness with reference to their setting and function in the general life-process."<sup>2</sup> According to the functional position thus suggested, even the most complex and the most valued of human activities are ultimately traceable to the needs of the organism, or, at any rate, to simple activities characteristic of the initiative (if there be such) and the responses of the life-process. Closely dependent upon the

adhered to regarding the relation of the "instrument" to the "organism" which through it "adjusts itself to the environment." The passage quoted implies a subordination of the mind to the organism; in other connections, however, it is the latter that is represented as secondary, the neural activity and the objective effects being said to express or to register the adjusting activity (p. 15). (3) Similarly, the reader is confused by an ambiguity in the term 'mind-body.' At the outset, a 'mind-body' process is described in terms of a relation between mental and bodily states (p. 18); somewhat later a 'mind-body' process is interpreted as an activity of the organism (p. 20); still a different view is implied when the question, "What is the organism, the mind-body, doing?" is followed by the sentence, "In other words, What is the will, or purposeful activity, accomplishing?" (p. 20). (4) Ames describes the adjustment as one of the organism to the environment (p. 15) but also as "an adjustment in the psycho-physical organism" (p. 18), and still again as one which occurs "through the psycho-physical organism" (p. 15). In the opinion of the present writer the various ambiguities and inconsistencies which we have mentioned represent not mere carelessness or accident; they are outcroppings of serious difficulties that inhere in the adopted standpoint.

The fourth of the points that we have noted is mentioned also in Professor Coe's recent *Psychology of Religion* (p. 30, note). The appearance of this volume makes it necessary to say that, while it also utilizes in part a point of view that may not improperly be termed 'functional,' the standpoint is radically different from that which we have set out to discuss in this essay.

<sup>1</sup> The standpoint of King in his treatises, *The Differentiation of the Religious Consciousness* and *The Development of Religion*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 23.

various activities, simple and involved, are the feelings and sentiments experienced by the individual; emerging from them, moreover, as plans of procedure in times of difficulty and conflict, are ideas, whose very significance, therefore, is determined by the situations that generate them, whose importance to the individual is conditioned by a direct personal experience of the obstacles to be overcome, and whose validity is solely a matter of successful guidance in practice.

The standpoint thus hastily sketched is, of course, a matter of common knowledge, and this renders it superfluous further to fill in the details of the outline. In many of their applications and developments, moreover, the various doctrines involved have time and again been subjected to criticism and have in turn received defense or restatement on the part of able champions. There is a manifest need, however, for further appraisal, as concerning more specifically the utilization of the functional principle in the interpretation of religious experience. True, King, Ames, and others have, by their demonstrations in fact, removed from the region of debate the question as to whether functionalism may offer any genuine contribution to our knowledge concerning the origin, nature, and development of religion. The very importance of their discussions, however, promises a degree of profitableness to one who seriously questions whether the accounts which they have given may be regarded as entirely successful.

The outstanding characteristics of functional interpretations of religion and the features that have contributed most to their attractiveness and their significance are perhaps three in number: (I) a persistent emphasis on the volitional and, more particularly still, the practical character of religion, as well as on the intimacy of the relation between religion and life; (II) a conviction that religion may be understood only through a study of its development and of the development of culture as a whole,—hence a single-minded devotion to a genetic method of treatment; (III) a recognition of the essentially social character of religion, as regards origin and nature as well as development, motives as well



as interests and ends. Were one to inquire whether a functional standpoint is capable of furnishing a satisfactory account of religion, many far-reaching questions of a general nature would at once arise. Is a functional statement capable, for example, of giving full recognition to the fact and the import of the contemplative, passive, and receptive phases of religion? Can it provide in any thorough-going way for the insistence of the religious consciousness that its object is in a very true sense both transcendent of experience and free from the mutability of the here and now? Does it enable one to admit that religion connotes, not so much adjustment to particular situations in the physical or social environment, as the search for such things as a new center of experience, a deeper life, a personal appreciation of the value and meaning of reality, or an identification of one's self with that which is felt to be alike most real and of highest worth? These and other questions are of serious importance to one concerned with an estimate of the possibilities and the limitations of the functional standpoint as such. Our present purpose, however, is of a more restricted scope. We undertake merely an examination of the more important accounts of religion which functionalism has thus far actually produced and we further restrict our discussion to three sets of considerations, determined by those features of functional interpretations which we have just singled out as most characteristic and significant.

## I

To the man of common sense it must be puzzling to understand how even eminent writers,—among them psychologists,—could come to define religion in terms of some idea or set of ideas, or some faculty or capacity of cognition. Even to the most superficial glance, if only it be naïve, religion is unmistakably distinct from creeds or from any knowledge about realities or facts; individuals and peoples to whom theories are matters of utter indifference may find in religion that which is of greatest moment to them. Now, whatever may be the particular mental bias resulting from continuous pre-

occupation with functional conceptions, it is not such as readily to cause a confusion between religion and theory, or any undue exaltation of the rôle of ideas in religious experience. Not cognition or even emotion, but action, is felt to constitute the inmost being of religion, as of life. Hence the emphasis upon custom, ritual, and ceremony. It must not be inferred, however, that the functionalist possesses any peculiar fondness for action as such; rather must he contend with a deep-seated aversion to anything, even in the way of action, that appears from the point of view of utility as superfluous. As keen as is his eye to detect the practical character of motives and results, so reluctant is his disposition to admit the presence or the worthwhileness of the unnecessary. It is not in the literature of functionalism, therefore, that the beauty, impressiveness, and sheer inevitableness of ritual receive their finest portrayal. Our indebtedness to this literature is connected rather with our present appreciation of the extent to which ritual and ceremony contribute to the actual needs of life.

Merely to say that, for the functionalist, religion is primarily an attitude, and an attitude fundamentally practical in character, is not as yet fully to define his conception. All theorists have more or less clearly recognized the bearing of religion upon life, though, of course, the life to which they have referred has not always been that of the present world or that of the socially-minded individual. There has, moreover, also been fairly general agreement as regards the converse fact. Religion, it has repeatedly been emphasized, has been profoundly modified, both in form and in spirit, by the conditions of life, the nature of its problems, the direction of its aspirations, and the character of the social, economic, and political institutions in which it has found embodiment. Even to put the matter thus, however, implies a dualism, or at least a distinction, between life and religion which the functionalist seeks to avoid. Says King, "Religious beliefs and practices are not merely *modeled* upon the analogy of a people's economic and social life. The religious life *is* this social life in one of its phases. It is an organic part of the

activity of the social body, not merely something built upon it."<sup>1</sup>

The contentions both of the essential identity of religion with life in one of its phases and of the instrumental character of religion find their clearest illustration and corroboration in the early stages of culture. It is to these especially, therefore, that functionalists preferably turn and it is with reference to them that their interpretations are most definite and convincing. Writes King, in a passage which Ames has incorporated in one of his chapters:<sup>2</sup> "Religion in primitive society may be regarded as primarily a system for the controlling of the group with reference to the ends which are felt most acutely by the group as a group. . . . All practices designed to do this are religious, whether they are definite forms of worship or not."<sup>3</sup> Quite in agreement is the view of Henke. "A rite or ceremony," he tells us, "is the observance of some formal act or series of acts in the manner prescribed by custom or authority, and from the point of view of functional psychology must be considered as a type of overt action performed for the purpose of control."<sup>4</sup> Hence, "even as the first locomotive, impractical

<sup>1</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, pp. 72f.

<sup>3</sup> *The Differentiation of the Religious Consciousness*, pp. 38f.

<sup>4</sup> *A Study in the Psychology of Ritualism*, p. 8. In the same paragraph Henke refers to the ceremonial as "designed for control." This statement, however, is so obviously incompatible with the psychological standpoint of the essay that it must be regarded as an inadvertence, unless the expression is intended as the equivalent of "performed for the purpose of control."

As of the origin, so of the perpetuity of ritual. "The ritual that has lost its vitality cannot survive" (p. 82). What preserves the statement from tautology is the preceding sentence, "Practicality is, withal, the keyword to the situation." "The survival of ritualism," we are told, "is dependent upon keeping intact a type of social consciousness that finds the ritualistic reaction a valuable method of control" (p. 81). "Wherever a comparatively primitive type of ritual survives in higher stages of culture, the social consciousness back of it still finds it a practical method of control" (p. 10). "Ceremonial performances that have lost their practical significance, though they may continue for awhile through sheer



as it may be to-day, grew out of practical demands, so the ritual has been an instrument of practical control.”<sup>1</sup>

Only through an unusual extension of the term may we call ‘religious’ all those practices of primitive life by which a control is effected over such acts as are thought to be of greatest social import. Instead of insisting on a narrower delimitation of the concept ‘religious,’ however, we wish rather to dispute the thesis that either rites and ceremonies or primitive religions (whose central features, in the view of functionalists, are customs and ceremonies of various sorts) are definable as systems or agencies of practical control. We call attention to three very general and fundamental facts.

(1) It is, indeed, unquestionable both that some ceremonies are essentially agencies of practical control and also that very many others exhibit the influence of the motive of control. The amazing diversity and complexity of primitive ceremonies, however, makes it difficult to believe that they all are utilitarian either in origin or in purpose. Nor is authority lacking behind which such a doubt may shield itself. Durkheim, for example, whose interpretation of Australian totemism is one of the most thorough as well as the most recent that we possess, maintains that “we have here a whole group of ceremonies whose sole purpose is to awaken certain ideas and sentiments, to attach the present to the past or the individual to the group. Not only are they unable to serve useful ends, but the worshippers themselves demand none.”<sup>2</sup> One who lays aside for the time being all

force of habit, soon lose their vitality and fall away” (p. 81). Incidentally it may be remarked that inertia is not as negligible a factor as functionalists are inclined to assume. What we shall contend with reference to the origin of ceremonial, moreover, holds true also of its survival: a variety of non-practical considerations must be recognized. As Stratton says in his analysis of the various “inner supports” of ceremonial: “But religion does not forever keep its eye on tangible benefits to be obtained; the ritual is *expressive*, and has in it no more of mere prudence and calculation than has the gold upon a state-house dome, or the bannered procession of a party victorious at the polls.” *The Psychology of the Religious Life*, p. 145.

<sup>1</sup> Henke, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, tr. by J. W. Swain, p. 378.

allegiance or deference to a particular psychological school, will be able to catalog a considerable number of other than strictly practical motives that operate in the genesis and development of ceremonial. Such motives are: (a) The pleasure derived in various ways, as, for example, from the mere actions, motions, and gesticulations,<sup>1</sup> from the element of rhythm in movement and speech, or from the heightening of emotions;<sup>2</sup> (b) the play impulse, as expressed either in physical movements or in the creations of the imagination;<sup>3</sup> (c) the mere repetition, through suggestion and imitation, of various sorts of accidental and spontaneous actions, and of such as result from inhibitions, super-excitations, or discharges of energy generally; (d) the consciousness of doing things as they have been done, of continuing the ways of earlier generations and thus of maintaining continuity,—hence a certain regard for the permanent, together with a sense of safety and the feeling of relationship to a larger company; (e) the passion for embellishment; (f) desire for self-expression, as well as publicly to acknowledge that certain beliefs or relations are cherished; (g) sense of fitness, that which is peculiarly important or honored demanding formality or pomp; (h) the impulse to imitate and to render vivid through action deeds and events in the lives of the gods;<sup>4</sup> (i) the commemoration and recollection of the past, “in a way making it present by a means of a veritable dramatic representation;”<sup>5</sup> (j) the renewal by the group of “the sentiment which it has of itself and of its unity;”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, tr. by J. W. Swain, p. 381.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Wundt, *Elements of Folk Psychology*, tr. by E. L. Schaub, p. 95.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Seashore, “The Play Impulse and Attitude in Religion,” *American Journal of Theology*, Vol. XIV, 1910, pp. 505–520, and *Psychology in Daily Life*, pp. 22ff.; Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, pp. 379ff.; for the inclusion in ceremonial of humorous episodes, cf. Wundt, *op. cit.*, p. 464.

<sup>4</sup> For an admirable discussion of this and the three preceding motives, see the chapters on ritualism and public worship in Stanton Coit’s *National Idealism and a State Church* and *The Soul of America*; see also Stratton, *The Psychology of the Religious Life*, pp. 141ff.

<sup>5</sup> Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, p. 372.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 375.

"rites are means by which the social group reaffirms itself periodically."<sup>1</sup> Of these various motives, functionalism, in its concern to discover the practical in religion, is for the most part oblivious. King, whose attitude is considerably more plastic than that of the other writers of the group to which he belongs, does indeed recognize the importance for ceremonial not merely of "unconscious changes . . . transmitted by imitation and social heredity"<sup>2</sup> but also of the play impulse.<sup>3</sup> But even this slight departure from the concepts of adjustment and practical control is regarded dubiously by a fellow-functionalism. Commenting on it, Henke remarks that "the place of play appears of minimum importance in the origin of ritualism. Practical interests are by far the most important. Play itself, when viewed from the agent's standpoint, is largely a practical interest. . . . In the development and survival of the ceremony, so-called play activities may emerge, but not without practical implications."<sup>4</sup>

(2) When we turn from ceremonial to the question of the objects regarded in early religion as sacred, we find functional interpretations somewhat less guilty of purchasing consistency at the cost of a full recognition of the various psychological factors involved. Says Ames, with reference to the development of Hebrew religion: "The first and lowest stage . . . is that in which anything which catches attention and excites wonder is considered sacred. The Semitic folklore and custom show the evidence of such a stage when rivers, springs, trees, stones, caves, and animals, particularly such objects as were unusual in appearance or in value, were sacred."<sup>5</sup> Henke likewise emphasizes the rôle played by "the moving object" as well as by "anything unusual in shape, size, position, or color."<sup>6</sup> Similarly, King acknowl-

<sup>1</sup> Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, p. 387.

<sup>2</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 58f.

<sup>4</sup> *A Study in the Psychology of Ritualism*, pp. 34f.

<sup>5</sup> *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 172.

<sup>6</sup> *A Study in the Psychology of Ritualism*, pp. 48f.



edges that various animals and forms of vegetation, as well even as inanimate objects "may easily and in quite explainable ways arouse a sort of spontaneous attention in people." <sup>1</sup> "There can be no doubt," he writes concerning the Niger tribes, "that it is some physical peculiarity of tree, shrub, or animal, a peculiarity of some practical significance, possibly, which has thrust it upon their attention and thus made it an appropriate dwelling for the ancestral spirit." <sup>2</sup> The very presence in this last quotation of the parenthetical phrase, "a peculiarity of some practical significance, possibly," of itself tells a story. Why should the phrase have occurred to the writer at all? And might not an objector to functional interpretation with equal truth have written "a peculiarity of no practical significance, possibly?" King's parenthetical phrase but prepares for a later assertion of a stronger nature: "So also with physical objects of unusual size or shape, or such as possess dangerous qualities. In all cases it should be borne in mind that the occasion which excites attention, *i. e.*, the strange and unusual object or phenomenon, is *first* recognized because it seems to have a close connection with some of the already existing activities of the individual or the group. . . . It is often said that for the savage the idea of the supernatural has its rise in that which appears to him in some way unusual. . . . This is all true, but it is important to remember that these things attract the savage because of the part they appear to play in something he is occupied in doing." <sup>3</sup> Thus, whereas functional writers generally admit into their accounts of the sacred and the supernatural, factors emphasized more especially by Max Müller, Marett, and Clodd, King (and, though perhaps less clearly, Ames and Henke also) recognize that this might be a cause for challenging their orthodoxy. Hence the but partially true, if not wholly unwarranted, thesis that, after all, to receive recognition and to impress themselves forcibly upon the mind, objects must be con-

<sup>1</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232, note.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 315.

nected with the various activities or practical interests that represent the life of the individual and of the group.

(3) It is becoming increasingly clear that, second in importance to no other element in primitive thought, is the belief that there is operative in nature generally, as well as in human affairs and in the capacities particularly of exceptional individuals, a mysterious, impersonal, quasi-mechanical power, variously called manitou, wakonda, orenda, mana, pokunt, yek, nauala, etc.<sup>1</sup> That this concept has "probably played a large part in the unfolding of human thought, and has consequently reacted in important ways upon behavior and custom,"<sup>2</sup> King himself is forced to recognize. If, however, "the mysterious power" has been an important factor in the genesis and development of customs, ceremonies, and religion generally, the inadequacy of the functional standpoint is clear. In fact, speaking of this concept, King himself makes the following frank admission: "It is difficult to relate it exactly to what has thus far been said of the development of the value-consciousness, and yet it has had a part in that development which we trust will not seem to be altogether adventitious, even though we should stand firmly upon the theory as thus far outlined."<sup>3</sup>

The three broadly important considerations which we have thus indicated render unsuccessful functionalism's restriction of the motives and the factors even of early religion to such as are of practical import or as relate to control. Numerous are the characteristics which enable objects to arouse attention and interest; very rich and diverse are the activities and the emotions, the longings and demands, of individual

<sup>1</sup> Cf. more particularly the discussions and the bibliographical references of Lovejoy, "The Fundamental Concept of the Primitive Philosophy," *Monist*, Vol. XVI, 1906, pp. 357-382; King, *The Development of Religion*, pp. 132-164; Leuba, *A Psychological Study of Religion*, pp. 70-84, 122f., 163; Goldenweiser, "Spirit, Mana, and the Religious Thrill," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. XII, 1915, pp. 632-640; Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, pp. 62, 188-239.

<sup>2</sup> King, *The Development of Religion*, p. 132.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

minds and of groups. As Mr. Eastman states in a paper which appears as these words are being written, "life has an interest in living," "organisms seriously thirst after experience in general";<sup>1</sup> and, as we shall imply in what is now to follow, individuals seek for meanings no less than for ways of adjustment and they strive for greater fullness of personal and of social life.

## II

The attitude of the functionalist in its polemic phase is vigorously expressed by King when he affirms that "the old method of trying to determine the essential qualities of the religious consciousness . . . by an analysis of religion in and of itself is scarcely more profitable than the scholastic explication of concepts."<sup>2</sup> So severe an indictment as this of the value of structural analysis cannot be expected to receive universal assent. Even the dissenters, however, would gladly join in the functionalist's insistence that it is both unscientific and futile to account for religious phenomena in terms of some postulated religious capacity, whether this be described as a special faculty, as an instinct, or as a perception of the infinite. Religion is not as independent an element of experience as these latter interpretations imply. It is involved, body and soul, in the fortunes and transformations of experience as a whole. This being the case, religion cannot be significantly interpreted except by such methods as are capable of disclosing the meanings of experience generally as these come to light either through logical analysis or, more particularly, in and through the process of development by which individuals become conscious of their own nature and of the world in which they live. In any account of origin and growth, however, it is but an expenditure of breath to explain in terms of hypothetically given capacities to do or to bring forth given results. To a certain extent, therefore, we must sympathize

<sup>1</sup> "The Will to Live," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. XIV, 1917, pp. 104, 107.

<sup>2</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 22.



with the initial attitude of the functionalist. But may one say, as King does, that "the scientist cannot be satisfied to regard anything as innate. His so-called ultimate data are ultimate only for the philosopher or for the non-scientific mind."<sup>1</sup> Is not the very opposite true? In so far as one wishes to distinguish between philosopher and scientist, or between the philosophy and the psychology of religion, must it not be said that some of philosophy's most important problems relate to assumptions which the scientist accepts without further ado and which are in this sense ultimate data for him?

The significant fact is that the functional interpretation of religion, even in the skillful hands of King, does start at a beginning which is assumed without any effort toward examination. The world of mere objective fact and of existences independent of interests and strivings, indeed, is held to emerge, through processes of abstraction and ideational construction, from an experience which is fundamentally appreciative or valuational. This latter experience, furthermore, though described as "a relatively primary form of conscious process,"<sup>2</sup> is brought into connection with "man's active relation to his environment, both physical and social."<sup>3</sup> Man's active relation, however, is an expression of his instinctive and impulsive equipment, and this it is which (although, as we shall presently see, not always clearly or consistently) represents King's ultimate datum. We shall not stress the point that there are here simply assumed, as matters of fact, those particular objective existences (namely, organisms or, to use King's term, 'men,' characterized by impulsive tendencies of various sorts and therefore by active relations with other particular objects, physical and social) which are represented in the analysis of experience as intellectual abstractions justified only by reference to interests that are fundamentally appreciative or valuational. Our immediate concern is rather to point out that functional interpretations of religion, although aspiring to be genetic, nevertheless do assume certain data as given, do actually

<sup>1</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

assume certain qualities as innate in a very important sense of that term.

It is in the writings of Ames and Henke that we find the most definite statements both as to what specific interests or instincts are, for functionalism, fundamental in early religion, and as to the precise character of these interests and instincts. Says Ames, "Food and sex are the great interests of the individual and of society. These may work out in various secondary forms, but the 'ground patterns' of man's life are determined by these two elemental forces."<sup>1</sup> With great care, therefore, Ames traces the ramifying influences of food and sex upon social and economic organization, custom and taboo, ceremonials and magic, sacrifice, and other elements that have either entered into or have conditioned the development of the various religions. As regards the exact nature of the interests of food and sex which are said to function in connection with religion, Ames does not leave us in doubt. They are "basal instincts" and are "so characteristic of the whole range of sentient life preceding man and now existing below him in the biological scale that it involves no daring assumption to infer that he possessed them from the most rudimentary stage of his existence."<sup>2</sup> Henke agrees with Ames in emphasizing the interests of food and sex. He feels the necessity, however, of adding at least two other instincts, fear and anger, though admitting that these are "derivative," inasmuch as they appear as "distinct emotional reactions," when, respectively, "the animal had experienced actual danger and pain in quest of food,"<sup>3</sup> and when "the animal was frustrated in its quest for food."<sup>4</sup> Here again the fundamental factors of religion are conceived as identical with instincts as they manifest themselves on the prehuman level of existence. "Primitive man's ceremonies," it is contended, "represent the functioning of inherited tendencies to action. . . . Primitive man has the sex impulse, and consequently the marriage ceremony."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> *A Study in the Psychology of Ritualism*, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

We read, indeed, that "to the writer many of the ceremonies described by the anthropologist seem to give evidence of thought as well as of instinct and impulse," and yet it is assumed that ceremony may be "an expression of innate hereditary acts and nothing more."<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of King with reference to the points just discussed is somewhat elusive. At times he would appear to be more persistent even than either Ames or Henke in his search for origins. More positively, certainly, and with greater emphasis, does he insist on the necessity of exhibiting the genesis of the values which attach, in the consciousness of the individual and of the group, to certain objects and practices. With less hesitation than is sometimes displayed by those who restrict mental life to a means of adjustment, he admits that "in a very general sense . . . everything which attracts attention may be the subject of a value-judgment."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, in allegiance to the principle with which he operates, King contends that it is only when response is delayed and a series of mediating acts conditions the desired satisfaction that objects or situations acquire any considerable value for consciousness. King's account of the ways in which intermediate processes originate and thus generate such valuations as precondition religious attitudes represents a highly suggestive bit of analysis. Nevertheless, a close study of the argument leaves one in some uncertainty as to whether or not there is agreement with the view of Ames and Henke, that the basal impulses of religion are to be found, not in the experience of conscious individuals as members of a social order, but in something far more primitive, namely, in the demands of organisms upon their environment. On the one hand, King's analysis, as has already been indicated, seems to terminate in impulsive and instinctive activities and there are suggestions every now and again of a biological point of view. On the other hand, we read the positive statement, "In no intelligible way can the religious consciousness or religious acts be

<sup>1</sup> *A Study in the Psychology of Ritualism*, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 46.



thought of as directly related to the biological struggle for existence.”<sup>1</sup> It may not be altogether without significance that King speaks preferably in terms, not of organism, but of life-process.<sup>2</sup> The latter term possesses a certain flexibility and indefiniteness and one cannot avoid the impression that it is these qualities which have commended it. It seems, somehow, to stand now for biological processes but again for the general movement of a dynamic experience. In any event, the life-process is not represented as merely practical in its concerns; to it are ascribed all sorts of spontaneous manifestations, play interests, and other non-utilitarian activities.<sup>3</sup> King’s account does not avoid a similar vagueness as regards the manner in which conscious values are thought to emerge through complications and delays of response. The initial explanation is based on the failure of individuals to secure an immediate satisfaction of needs and desires. Nevertheless, as King assures us in a footnote, “we do not ignore the social factor in the valuational consciousness. It is of the greatest importance, but we shall reserve it for treatment in another connection.”<sup>4</sup> What we find in these other connections, however, is the statement either that the group creates certain values or that it enhances and renders permanent “the simple values brought to consciousness by the growth of intermediate activities,” causing the latter to appear “genuinely ultimate and universal.”<sup>5</sup> Even such statements as these scarcely dispel one’s doubt as to King’s precise position. Are the valuations involved in all religions intelligible except by reference to conscious individuals living among and affected by others of their kind, and seeking, more or less clearly and more or less deviously, wider and deeper social relationships? King seems to shy at a view as biological as that of Ames and Henke and yet his functional predilections prevent a negative answer to the question.

<sup>1</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., for example, *ibid.*, pp. 18, 22, 23, 26, 37, 59, 61, 62, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Cf., for example, *ibid.*, pp. 83, 100, 103, 111.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45, note.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Similar differences of emphasis occur in connection with the accounts which the various functional writers give of the development of religion. For example, the more unambiguous stress which Ames and Henke place upon certain instincts and interests of the organism causes them to suggest, at times, that the development may be read in terms of an increasing refinement and specialization of desire.<sup>1</sup> In the main, however, functionalists agree that, inasmuch as religion arises in connection with those interests which individuals within a group share and pursue in common, the development of religion corresponds with the changing character of that which is of most vital significance to the group as a whole. The appearance of higher types of religion, therefore, is an expression of widened and elaborated social interests. King even goes so far as to say that "the deistic conceptions of different times and races are, in the main, quite discrete and unrelated to each other except in the fact that they are all varying modes of social reaction and social determination."<sup>2</sup> For the functionalist, of course, changes in social interests are explicable in terms of changed adjustments which have become necessary on the part of the organism or the life-process. Throughout their writings, therefore, much stress is laid upon such factors as "the failure of the food supply through natural causes or through the encroachment of other tribes, the discovery of new lands or resources, the invention of tools or weapons,"<sup>3</sup> as well as upon tribal struggles, warfare, and migration.

Admitting that the phenomena of religion cannot be understood without employing a developmental point of view and acknowledging the suggestiveness with which functional writers have performed their task, one may nevertheless inquire whether all of the demands of genetic inter-

<sup>1</sup> Cf., for example, Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 117: "To a far later day than is usually recognized the governing impulse in these [the sacrificial] rites, is the desire for food, though this may become refined into the desire for a particular kind of food more potent or spiritual than others."

<sup>2</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 226.

<sup>3</sup> Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 170.

pretation have been complied with. To such an inquiry we believe that a negative answer must be given. Our reasons are the following:

(1) Functional accounts violate those principles of genetic logic which Baldwin has termed "Canon of Progression," "Canon of Modal Relevancy," and "Canon of Modal Unity."<sup>1</sup> To illustrate: They identify the food-interest as it functions in the rise and development of religious experience with the food-impulse of the "whole range of sentient life." To do this, however, or even to describe the former as a 'refinement' of the latter, is highly misleading. Human individuals not merely have certain feelings and impulses, but they are conscious of these and of themselves as experiencing them. Indeed, as Green and many others have repeatedly urged, man may so detach himself from any desire as to conceive himself "in possible enjoyment of the satisfaction of other desires . . . and the desire itself is more or less stimulated or checked, according as its gratification in this involuntary forecast appears conducive to happiness or otherwise."<sup>2</sup> Thus, as organic impulses and instincts become elements in the self-conscious life of individuals, vast changes are wrought. On the one hand, the impulses and instincts themselves become transformed; on the other, new desires and, with them, new values arise through the comparison, stimulation, and repression of its acts by the self, and through the aspiration of the self to acquire a nature which as yet reveals itself only to the constructive imagination. A genetic account which fails, through its point of view, even to recognize the changes just indicated or to present an analysis of the food-impulse and other interests as these come to manifest themselves in the actual experience of human individuals, cannot be regarded as satisfactory.<sup>3</sup> Functionalism, as represented at any rate

<sup>1</sup> *Thought and Things, or Genetic Logic*, Vol. I, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 127.

<sup>3</sup> For an interesting account of the new forms and the changed significance assumed by the food-impulse in human life, see Wundt, *Ethics*, Vol. I, tr. by Gulliver and Titchener, pp. 169-177.



by King, has indeed undertaken to point out the conditions under which impulsive acts come to acquire a value for consciousness, but the consciousness of the value has for the most part been treated as epiphenomenal rather than as itself a transforming and a creative factor within experience. There is a general failure on the part of functional writers, moreover, to do full justice to those changes in impulsive and instinctive acts which result from the fact that human life is essentially social. It is not the bare performance of instinctive acts, the satisfaction of appetite, or the adjustment to the envioning conditions of nature, that is focal in consciousness even in the case of primitive man. On the contrary, the concern is with matters of recognized social interest. Custom, taboo, ceremonial, expressions of approval and disapproval, of encouragement and of command, surcharge even the simplest acts with values and emotions not attached to them in prehuman stages of conduct. The meaning which acts and objects possess for the human individual, therefore, cannot be arrived at by any method that considers merely the function which the acts subserve and the rôle which the objects play in the life-process. Consider, by way of illustration, the phenomenon of sacrifice. Ames believes that he can safeguard his interpretation by studying the results which the acts involved effect. This leads to the conclusion that the "central feature" in the rite, "the most basic and characteristic act," and "the governing impulse," all relate to the food-process.<sup>1</sup> How remote all this is from expressing "the meaning attached to these [sacrificial] acts,"<sup>2</sup> should be clear to anyone who has not set out to study them with definite psychological prepossessions.

(2) Closely related to the foregoing is a second failure of functionalism as a genetic account. The commendable endeavor to avoid the errors of those who would find throughout all the various stages of development the characteristic traits of advanced religions,<sup>3</sup> leads too frequently to the

<sup>1</sup> *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, pp. 116f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> That is, in the language of Baldwin, the "fallacy of Implication, or

converse fallacy of interpreting the higher religions in terms of the lower.<sup>1</sup> Geneticism demands that each stage be dealt with according to principles determined by its own nature. Even granting that, in the case of primitive religions, one cannot avoid depending very largely upon the point of view of adjustment, of acts involved and results effected, such external or objective considerations fail hopelessly to exhibit the meaning of the higher forms of religious experience. What has just been said with reference to sacrifice affords a clue as to the reason for a complaint recently made to the writer by a thoughtful student. He expressed disappointment over the fact, that, while functional accounts introduced for him a greater measure of order and meaning into the highly diverse and chaotic religious phenomena of primitive peoples, they continued to impress him as utterly strange and artificial with reference to any religious experience of which he had direct knowledge.

(3) In discussing the higher manifestations of religion, functionalists of necessity shift on occasion from the point of view of adjustment or adaptation to that of personal realization. This fluctuation of viewpoint, however, occurs without any conscious, or at any rate any explicitly indicated, appreciation of the difference between them. Nor, of course, is there any endeavor to trace the steps by which a transition occurs from the stage of religion characterized in terms of adjustment to those higher stages in which the latter is either displaced or supplemented by the motive of personal realization.

(4) Without question there is truth in the functionalist's contention that "religious types are not related to one another in causal or sequential terms," that "there is no continuum of reason or perception," and that we may not "trace a gradual unfolding of some innate concept of a divine or ethical ruler of the universe."<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the Implicit, or the Potential." *Thought and Things, or Genetic Logic*, Vol. I, p. 24.

<sup>1</sup> Baldwin's "fallacy of Equality," *ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> King, *The Development of Religion*, pp. 214, 216, and 226, respectively.

there is an underestimation of the rôle that thought does play and therefore also of the degree of continuity actually present, if one asserts that the various stages of religion are "quite discrete and unrelated to each other except in . . . that they are all varying modes of social reaction and social determination."<sup>1</sup> The development of religion cannot, indeed, be regarded as the evolution of an idea or of a thought. Nevertheless, thought is a genuine, and, it is important to note, a constantly increasing factor in the development. Moreover, it does more than merely secure particular satisfactions and adjustments; its acts and its results are far less discrete than the functionalist holds. (a) Thought is concerned not alone with the situations of practical difficulty that arise from time to time but also with questions that have arisen in the course of its own activity and with the examination and elaboration of earlier conclusions. Thus, there is a measure of continuity within the thought-life of peoples, and this continuity reflects itself to a certain extent in their religion. (b) Thought is instrumental not merely in effecting adjustments to stimuli but in modifying the stimuli through changes which it inaugurates in the environment. To this extent thought becomes objectified and a certain continuity results. (c) Similarly, thought not merely serves the demands of impulses and instincts but it judges the latter, controls and reshapes them; it introduces a measure of harmony and unity, and it evaluates and directs the self which it thus creates towards goals which it postulates. It is but a partial truth to affirm that "the knowing process, wherever it is alive and urgent, is concerned with action, with the adjustment of means to ends."<sup>2</sup> Thought is operative in the forming of ends as well as in the devising of means. Thus again does thought find an incarnation which lends a certain rational continuity to life and to religion. (d) Thought effects an expansion of one's world and, proportionately, alters actions and reactions; in this way again it is operative in introducing a measure of rational

<sup>1</sup> King, *The Development of Religion*, p. 226. Quoted above, p. 345.

<sup>2</sup> Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 315.



sequence into those human attitudes and evaluations which for the functionalist constitute religion.

(5) Functionalism is inadequate as a genetic account because of its failure thoroughly and consistently to recognize that religion is not merely a derivative or secondary phenomenon,<sup>1</sup> but is itself an important factor in social evolution, that religion is not merely an expression of those values which social groups have in various ways come to regard as most vital, but powerfully determines what at any given time are regarded as the most vital values. The indefiniteness of functional conceptions of religion<sup>2</sup> makes them extremely elusive. The emphasis of the discussions, however, is entirely in harmony with the standpoint from which re-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. King, *The Development of Religion*, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Leuba is quite justified in his criticism that King has "singled out a means of *connecting* together the whole of life, and not one that can be used to *differentiate* any particular portion of it," and in his contention that Ames's discussion of religion in its relation to social interests and social movements involves much confusion due to "juggling with the word." Cf. *A Psychological Study of Religion*, pp. 50 and 54, respectively.

Ames, for example, sometimes teaches that in advanced civilizations religion exists along side of law, art, and science, not merely as a separate but sometimes even as an antagonistic interest (*The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 279), that the religious nature, "though not something distinguishable and separable in any mechanical and exclusive way," possesses just as much "independence and uniqueness" as "one's artistic nature or one's scientific nature" (*ibid.*, p. 290). On the other hand, however, religion is defined as "just the consciousness of the great interests and purposes of life in their most idealized and intensified forms" (*ibid.*, p. 280); or, somewhat differently still, as a "phase of all socialized human experience" (*ibid.*, p. 280); or again, as "a participation in the ideal values of the social consciousness" (*ibid.*, p. 356). At times, moreover, religion is defined in terms of the *inclusiveness* of its ends (*ibid.*, p. 302); at other times, in terms of the *felt value* of its ends (*ibid.*, p. 168). To give one more example of a confusing ambiguity in the concept 'religious:' we are told that "religion, in a psychical, as well as a scriptural sense, is a matter of the spirit rather than of the letter" (*ibid.*, p. 368). In spite of this fact, Ames writes: "In primitive groups there could be no non-religious persons. The customs were imperative and inexorable. Anyone who would not conform was punished or expelled from the group and not infrequently was put to death" (*ibid.*, p. 356).

ligion appears as a product of various psychological and economic causes and as an expression or reflection or phase of the most idealized interests, of social experiences, or of the ideal values of the social consciousness. If, however, as an unbiased scrutiny inevitably reveals, religion has throughout been one of the most important factors both in its own further development and in the modification of those conditions that have reciprocally influenced it, functionalism must in so far also be pronounced unsatisfactory as a genetic account of religion.

### III

No less insistent than its emphasis upon the developmental approach has been functionalism's contention of the fundamentally social character of religion. It is by reference to the social quality that the religious experience is differentiated from the valuational attitude generally,<sup>1</sup> that religion is distinguished from magic,<sup>2</sup> that religious ceremonial is set apart from custom as such,<sup>3</sup> that religious persons are contrasted with the non-religious.<sup>4</sup> It is through changes in the social consciousness that modifications and developments of ritual are accounted for,<sup>5</sup> and that the growth and decay of creeds are explained.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the persistent claim of the essentially social character of all that falls within the sphere of religion, coupled with statements to the effect that "the man who enters thoroughly into the social movements of his time is to that extent genuinely religious though he may characterize himself otherwise,"<sup>7</sup> results in the obliteration of any discernible distinction between the concepts 'religious' and 'social.' Accordingly, Ames describes non-religious persons as "those who fail to enter vitally into a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. King, *The Development of Religion*, pp. 63ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 189ff.; Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 72.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 358ff.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Henke, *A Study in the Psychology of Ritualism*, pp. 57, 63.

<sup>6</sup> Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, pp. 380ff., 396ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 358.

world of social activities and feelings.”<sup>1</sup> But is not theory here riding roughshod over classifications well-nigh universally accepted? Does not religion itself, as Stratton has so suggestively pointed out, involve conflicting motives, inducing, it is true, participation in social action and feeling, but also the very contrary, namely, withdrawal from, if not actual repudiation of, all obligations to the interests or welfare of fellow-men? The list of those who have been acclaimed ‘saints’ by widely different religions of varying levels of development contains the names of many who, by Ames’s definition, would be excluded entirely from the circle of the religious! But we would not dwell on this anomalous situation or on the difficulty which Ames’s conception encounters in finding a place for those religious prophets and geniuses who are antagonistic to the values and attitudes characteristic of their groups and who so broke with the social consciousness as to fall martyrs to it. Instead of discussing the respects in which the religious and the social are too closely identified, let us raise the question whether functionalism has adequately recognized the essentially social phases which religion does possess. In at least three respects do there seem to be shortcomings.

(1) As we have already had occasion to notice, functional accounts fail to take notice of the peculiarly subtle and intricate ways in which social feelings and attitudes are entangled in even the simplest of human actions. It is not sufficient simply to point to the influence of social factors in the differentiation of the religious from the valuational life generally. Social factors enter in an essential way into the genesis of all human values. They affect decisively such matters even as the procuring and consumption of food, sex relations, and the attitude of hostility, to say nothing of the selection of names, the phenomena of initiation, the construction of huts and lodges, clan relationships, etc. It denotes an inadequate recognition of the social phase of religion when functionalism represents religious acts and rites as concerned primarily, if not exclusively, with such external

<sup>1</sup> Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 359.



ends, for example, as the securing of food or the multiplication of food objects, an interpretation that must seem almost grotesque to the one engaged in such acts or rites.

(2) The functionalist does indeed emphasize the fact that it is only those acts which are done in common and those values which are shared by members of the group that can acquire the intensity, ideality, and permanence requisite to make them religious. He points out also the dependence of certain types of ceremonial upon specific sorts of social structure. Moreover, he admits incidentally, though, as we have seen, with inadequate appreciation, that the performance of religious rites does, as a matter of fact, consolidate the interests and vivify the spirit of the group. But more than all this needs to be said by one who would fully express the social motive in religion. For, surely in its higher stages and even, as we are coming more clearly to see, in its elementary forms, religious acts are a direct evidence of man's longing for a more complete and social selfhood and of his endeavor to participate more fully in the social consciousness. In exposing the fallacies of the earlier gift-theories of sacrifice, Robertson Smith maintains that sacrificial rites assumed the form of a meal, but of a meal which was essentially an act of communion in which the deity was believed to participate along with the worshippers. Whether the elimination from sacrifice of the features of oblation and renouncement is justified, as Wundt maintains,<sup>1</sup> or leads to a distorted interpretation, as Durkheim holds,<sup>2</sup> need not here concern us. The important consideration is the ever increasing evidence that sacrifice, in common with other religious acts, expresses, as an essential motive, a desire both for a certain enlargement such as comes through communion and for identification with a more inclusive spirit than that of the human individual. Basing the assertion on the earlier work of Spencer and Gillen, Ames maintains that the Intichiuma ceremonies of the Australian tribes "were originally elaborate efforts to increase the food supply by increasing

<sup>1</sup> *Elements of Folk Psychology*, p. 434.

<sup>2</sup> *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, pp. 34off.

the totem.”<sup>1</sup> The evidence which Durkheim has assembled is sufficient to indicate that such a view should not stand unchallenged, even though this writer may be passing to an equally unsatisfactory extreme when he asserts that Intichiuma ceremonies contain as two essential elements, “an act of communion and an act of oblation,”<sup>2</sup> and that even the most rudimentary cults known to-day exhibit “the most mystical form of the alimentary communion.”<sup>3</sup>

(3) A third shortcoming which we find in functionalism, so far as its recognition of the social is concerned, can here but receive mention. To enter into a discussion as to whether such a standpoint as that represented by Ames and King can sufficiently escape subjectivism to provide logically for the existence of any reality or objects independent of the experience of human individuals, or even of a single individual, would be to repeat numerous arguments and counter arguments that have been advanced and readvanced during recent years. But even such objective existence as King gives to many other concepts he denies to those of religion. “Since the concepts of religion symbolize values rather than describe an objective order of existence,” he writes, “the psychologist must be careful to avoid treating them in the same way as he would the concepts of science.”<sup>4</sup> What the religionist regards as an order of reality, according to King and functionalists generally, is in the last analysis a manifestation of the way in which imagination portrays the fact of certain valuational experiences enjoyed by the individual. It is true, of course, that, in addition to deities who are the direct embodiments of existing valuational attitudes and are therefore vital to experience, there are occasional deities who, though believed to exist, are not worshipped. For the functionalist such deities as the latter cannot be different in origin from those about whom scrupulously observed cults center. In so far, therefore, as he does

<sup>1</sup> *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, p. 342.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 340.

<sup>4</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 263.

not find them to be purely "play deities" constructed upon the analogy of those who are actually worshipped, he is compelled to regard them as "stranded" <sup>1</sup> deities, survivals of a period whose interests radically differed from those of later times. He is unable to admit that the lack of a cult, in the case of certain deities, can be due to the fact that these particular deities originated, not in human needs, but as a result of causal inquiries or of intellectual processes. <sup>2</sup> Nor could he concede that the deity-concept is one to be tested and examined by methods such as are employed to determine whether or not an objective fact of existence is being described. Gods, in brief, are not known but are used; they do not belong to the plane of the actual but to the realm of values. "A deity," says King, "is a symbol, more or less personal in form, of a value or values which have arisen in the experience of some individual person or people." <sup>3</sup> Let us grant that man may not worship the merely actual, that religion by its very nature involves a reference to human needs and aspirations. But is not the religious object regarded by the religious consciousness both as genuinely objective and as no less truly existent than any reality which may be mentioned? Deprive the religious object of actuality, furthermore, and does it not lose that which makes it social in character? Except in the realm of the actual, how may an object be one which is shared in common, while nevertheless differing from such entities as moral or æsthetic norms in that the relations between it and human individuals are social? The functional standpoint, therefore, leads quite naturally to the insistence that religious experience does not, or at least need not, involve a social relation between worshipper and deity. Says Ames, "It is as possible to have prayer which is not prayer 'to' some person or thing, as to have sacrifice which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Development of Religion*, pp. 236 and 237.

<sup>2</sup> For a contrasting view which at the same time discloses with greater completeness the motives fundamental to ideas of great unseen beings, see Leuba, *A Psychological Study of Religion*, pp. 86ff., particularly pp. 96ff., and Stratton, *The Psychology of the Religious Life*, pp. 314f.; compare with Wundt, *Elements of Folk Psychology*, pp. 93f.

<sup>3</sup> *The Development of Religion*, p. 261.



is not sacrifice 'to' some person or thing."<sup>1</sup> Far truer than this to experience are the repeated assertions of Miss Strong to the effect that "prayer is the direct interaction of two selves arising simultaneously in consciousness;" "it is a relation of selves, and aims at the production of another self;" as is universal in the relations between selves, moreover, there are two phases of prayer,—the practical concern for strength, inspiration, and the insight necessary for the bearing of burdens and the performance of tasks, and also the æsthetic interest expressed in a "contemplative sharing of the life of a larger self," in "the enjoyment of God, as an end in itself."<sup>2</sup>

Thus we are forced to the conclusion that those functional interpretations which, under the influence of biological and evolutionary conceptions, interpret religious experience in terms of its setting in the life-process, of adjustment, or of practical control, so impoverish and enslave mind as to be inadequate as accounts, not merely of the nature and genesis of religion and of the course of its development, but also of certain of the social characteristics which religion must be conceded to possess.

<sup>1</sup> *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *The Psychology of Prayer*, pp. 24, 25, 90, and 96, respectively. The fact that we have quoted these passages does not imply an endorsement of the method employed in the essay. The very approach that is taken seems to lead to a degree of confusion. We read: "Any self which we know and distinguish from other things is not something which *has* consciousness . . . but something which arises *in* consciousness," and following this is the statement that "the consciousness in which it arises is of a social type" (p. 18). But, the reader will at once ask, is it not the selves which arise within consciousness that should be described as social, rather than the consciousness within which they both arise? And, indeed, the writer herself implies this when she says that "consciousness begins *in* the child" and that "*he* attains self-consciousness through personal relations" (p. 19, italics mine). After being thus told that the child himself attains to consciousness and to self-consciousness, we are disturbed to learn that "the selves which enter into relation . . . are mental facts, states of consciousness. It is an idea of myself and an idea of you which relate themselves in such a way as to produce a new self" (p. 20). Similarly, prayer, though described as a relation between selves, becomes at times but a relation between two ideas of selves.







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